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THE REBEL PRESIDENT

A BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY OF

SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

by

DURLAB SINGH

The author of "The Sentinel of the East" and "The Valiant Fighter"

FOREWORD BY

SARDUL SINGH CAVEESHAR

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THE REBEL PRESIDENT

To

All those patriots of the world who cared not for their material positions, budged not from their lofty ideals and laid down their lives in the service of their country

FOREWORD

Shriyut Subhas Bose has in him the making of an Indian De Valera. He possesses the same determination, the same spirit of restlessness, of sacrifice and of devotion to the country's cause as are such a marked feature in the career of the great Irish leader. Subhas Babu is endowed with courage and rectitude of character as few other Indian leaders can lay claim to. He is immensely resourceful and far-sighted. He has unbounded capacity to work and inspire enthusiasm for an object on which he sets his heart. His gift for organization is almost unrivalled. He is an idealist, but he never ignores practical considerations. Endowed with such virtues, he is bound to succeed where many others have failed.

The present awakening in India is due to the great devotion to the cause of Indian freedom by Mahatma Gandhi and his lieutenants. Whenever India becomes free, it must be due to the consciousness for Indian freedom, with which Mahatmaji and his followers have inspired the Indian rank and file. But.................... ....India now requires a leader who is more in tune with Indian sentiments and aspirations .... They want a leader who can appreciate and sympathise with their shortcomings and failings, and who can chalk out a course of action for them best suited to their temperament and capacity. Young India feels that Subhas Babu is certainly such a leader.

S. Durlab Singh's book shows how Subhas Babu from his very youth has been working with one single aim, the independence of India from foreign domination. What difficulties he had to meet, how he surmounted them and how he put before the country the right path when others were working half-heartedly and in confusion is clearly set forth in the pages that follow.

Subhas Babu's sudden disappearance has attracted the attention not only of India, but also of Europe and America towards his ideals and his methods of work. This character-sketch is thus a very timely addition to the biographical and political literature of the country. It shows us what Subhas Babu aimed at and fought for, what weapons he used and what obstacles he had to overcome. The book also shows that a person like Subhas Babu cannot remain suppressed for a long time. I hope, when Babuji reappears, he will reappear as the friend of mankind and as a liberator of the poor and the down-trodden. I am glad Sardar Durlab Singh's book gives us a clear insight into the life and character of such a hero.

Lahore : SARDUL SINGH CAVEESHAR

25th February, 1941.

PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

There are friends and even outsiders who believe that I have produced a very good book on Shyt: Subhas Chandra Bose and that is why it is running into repeated editions in quick intervals. But my personal belief is quite different. I sincerely feel that it is only the extreme love of the Indian people for their exiled leader that has compelled the fourth edition of the *Rebel President* within a period of about two years and not the skill or excellence of the author that has commanded such wide circulation.

As a matter of fact it was difficult to imagine even that the fourth impression of the book would ever be called for. I must, therefore, express my deep sense of gratitude to my readers in general and the people of my country in particular, who, in their traditional hero worship and devotion to the cause of India's freedom have overlooked all other considerations and given their widest acceptance to a book written by weak, incompetent, unskilled and utterly inexperienced hands.

There should be no hesitation whatever in confessing that I have neither the talent of an author nor the skill and flow of a journalist. What I possess is my

humble love for my country and a feeling of veneration for those who serve it. But for these qualifications the author of these pages would have either been a petty clerk in an Electric Supply Company or a newsboy in a big town. One consciousness, however, is there, that in spite of all my weaknesses and defects this small volume has never failed to appeal to the heart of the reader and serve the purpose for which it was written.

In all humility I present the fourth edition of the book to my countrymen which is only a reprint of the third and further promise that a Supplement of The Rebel President will soon be sent to the readers with new facts and discussions about Shyt: Subhas Chandra Bose which could not for one reason or the other be included in the present volume and thus make the biography of one of the noblest sons of India complete.

Lahore : DURLAB SINGH
6th May, 1943.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

In presenting the third revised edition the author first of all wishes to thank the readers for their generous response to the first two editions. It was in June 1941, when the second edition was published. During the thirteen months that have elapsed many changes have taken place in the world politics and much has been said or written about Shyt : Subhas Chandra Bose. Naturally the changed circumstances necessitated a re-touching of the whole book and adding of considerable new matter.

Subhas Bose has spent greater years outside India than any other living Indian leader. The period of his forcible banishment and voluntary exile both are full of activities. It was, therefore, deemed necessary to dwell at length on the subject of his previous visits to Europe. A separate chapter has been added and captioned "The Exile" and the chapter about his exit from the scene of Indian politics is thoroughly revised and the latest developments discussed. This fills up the gaps left in the previous editions.

One word to the critics of the book. It is wrong to believe that Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar or any other Forward Bloc leader has been "puffing" me with their money. I should like to make it clear that I am in no way connected with the Forward Bloc organization but certainly it is my conviction that Gandhiji with all his faith in truth and non-violence had been violently unjust to Subhas Chandra Bose.

Secondly the author does not claim any literary laurels for this book. It was written not with a view to satisfy those who read it expecting to gain any literary knowledge out of it. There was no other object apart from vindicating the personality of one who had been all along a noble fighter for India's freedom and a victim of the right wing tyranny. Those who want literary knowledge, therefore, are advised to seek it elsewhere, Dickens, Thackeray or Galsworthy.

The author wishes to reiterate his indebtedness to Caveeshar Sahib for the foreword he had contributed to the first edition and to Sardar Sawan Singh for his all-round assistance. Mr. Hira Lal Seth has also rendered valuable assistance in retouching the third edition. I must, therefore, express my gratefulness for his co-operation and assistance.

In the end I must thank all those whose good wishes I have always carried with me.

Lahore,
July 9, 1942.

DURLAB SINGH

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In similar circumstances history has seen nations becoming completely demoralised but it is a matter of pride for the Indian people that even after a greedy foreign administration of over hundred and fifty years children born in India have upheld their high moral character and never lagged behind their contemporaries in the most civilized countries of the world.

There is a glorious record of people born in India from time to time who reckoned their own personal pleasures as nothing and dedicated their lives to the cause of making their country great and free. Towards the close of the nineteenth century we have seen a miracle indeed. Great men began to emerge in one part of the country or the other—men with sensitive souls and burning hearts, who felt the needs of the people and whose discerning eyes saw the need of the hour. These men strove to fight the demon of slavery in its various forms—some fought to rid the people of the social evils, some to remove the people's poverty and some to fight foreign domination. Besides great leaders of movements in this period India produced such illustrious writers, poets and artists as Rabindranath Tagore, Sarojini Naidu and Arbindo Ghosh, such scientists, scholars and lawyers as Jagdish Chandra Bose, Hardyal, S. Radhakrishnan and C. R. Dass—men known throughout the world for their great intellectual achievements. India is still teeming with great men, and among the younger leaders, two—Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose—have captured the hearts of the youth of the country and stirred them as no one before has done.

The great political organization of the country—the Indian National Congress, which has guided the country for over half a century now, has thrown up mighty men and movements Hundreds of thousands in the country have undertaken sufferings at its commands and we have witnessed in this country the almost unexpected spectacles of men acting like heroes after centuries of suppression and helplessness

The policy of this organization has varied from time to time with the change of its leadership, which with the passage of time has tended to pass on more and more into the hands of people more impatient and revolutionary in nature than their predecessors. From the old liberals to Gandhi—from Gandhi to Nehru and from that group it is in the course of passing into younger people still, the spearhead of whose thrust is the ex-President of the Congress, Subhas Chandra Bose.

Before narrating the life-story, sacrifices and other activities of this remarkable personality, it would not be out of place to give the readers a brief narrative of the stages of development through which this great organization has passed and the process of evolution by which the prasent-day revolutionary spirit entered into its principles.

(2)

Though actually this organization came into existence in the year 1885 through the efforts of a retired English officer. Mr. A. O. Hume, who had for a long time held the high post of Secretary to the

Government of India in the Home Department, nevertheless its seeds may be said to have been sown in 1835 by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, one of the makers of Modern India, whose efforts were partly responsible for the introduction of English education in the country. The English education, which was introduced in India with the mere object of training clerks to run the machinery of the Government, also turned out some awakened young men, who after receiving higher education in India and abroad became politically and racially conscious. It awakened self-respect and patriotism in them and the desires to see their country great and free. With this began the revolt against the Englishman's sense of racial superiority and his attitude of insolent imperialism towards the subject races.

Mr. Hume, sensing the need of the moment, placed a proposal before the socially advanced Indians and later represented to the then Viceroy Lord Dufferin *that in order to ensure lasting peace and permanent* maintenance of law and order an association must be formed, having for its objects to promote mental, moral, social and political regeneration of the people of India. The idea pleased the Viceroy who, while giving his assent to such an institution, believed that "as the head of the Government he had found the greatest difficulty in ascertaining the real wishes of the people; and that for purposes of administration it would be a public benefit if there existed some responsible organisation through which the Government might be kept

informed regarding the best Indian public opinion." Mr. Hume, after obtaining the approval of Lord Dufferin, endeavoured earnestly for some time and on Decemeer 28, 1885, he met with some success in his mission, when he was able to hold the first session of the Indian National Congress at Bombay under the presidentship of Mr. W. C. Bannerjee.

To begin with the Congress was a very tame body and made extremely modest demands in a deferential tone, never forgetting its loyalty to the Crown. As a matter of fact the mere aim of this great revolutionary organization of to-day, busy now in the life-and-death struggle for the attainment of complete independence for India, was nothing more than to create a social relationship among all the political workers of the country, to get some measures of reforms, to achieve some concessions in the services and to have some commercial monopolies for business men.

For many years afterwards the reins of the Congress remained in the hands of Dadabhai Naoroji and his other colleagues. They were considered to be the champions of liberty in their time and they were eminently fitted for all honour but there can be no denying the truth that their activities were confined mainly to the passing of respectful resolutions and nothing beyond that. They had enough of confidence in the British Parliament that their legitimate demands would certainly be conceded. The most that they claimed was a greater share in the

administration, a larger representation in the Legislative Councils and a greater freedom of criticism. At its annual sessions political grievances and problems of the advancement of India were discussed. Although Dadabhai Naoroji in his presidential address in 1907 had made self-government his principal theme, yet the demands of the Congress had never been more than the redress of specific grievances and a greater share in the administration of the country.

(3)

So far the Congress had never come into direct conflict with the Government but with the advent of the twentieth century it fought a series of non-violent battles. The bold stand taken up by the people of Bengal during the partition days set quite a new dawn before the country. Men from all communities voluntarily joined to take up the challenge hurled by the Government and gave a proof of utmost courage and discipline during the crisis. Threats of imprisonment and bullets were bravely faced. The agitation was a storm in itself. It laid bare the bureaucracy and set the opening of a new era in the country.

The estimate of public awakening gave fresh hopes to the leaders that the country could be led to fight for any greater objective. The result was that the extremists quite hopeful of the future began to pour into the Congress politics and the moderates finding themselves not in a position to keep pace with them withdrew from it.

Some moderates, however, were still there ; but they also left the field, though with great reluctance when it became clear to them that the masses had been greatly awakened and that they preferred a dynamic lead. Tilak henceforth became a dominant figure in the Congress politics and his bold slogan "Swaraj is my birthright and I must get it" received a popular applaud.

This event compels for a moment a reflection into the character of the great Maharashtra leader. A closer study of the history of the Congress bears testimony to the fact that at every transitional stage in its life there always appeared at its helm some unusually great personality with high moral character, courage and sacrifice. Tilak was undoubtedly the hero of this particular stage. He always had the vehemence and the passion for a direct and immediate action. He always scorned the tameness of the moderates and admired the courage of extremists. It is said that he would even go as far as to the length of preaching violence in his speeches and in his writings. His deeds, writings and personality exerted a mighty influence over the Bengalis because he always backed their heroic deeds in his paper. His articles were said to be always exciting and inflammatory; young men therefore always chose to follow his lead. His long conviction and transportation was also due to his seditious pen. He commented on the murder of two English ladies in Bengal by a bomb in an encouraging mood and Mr. Justice Davar while transporting him for six years

said, "The articles are seething with sedition; they preach violence; they speak of murders with approval, and the cowardly and atrocious act of committing murders with bombs not only meets with your approval, but you hail the advent of the bomb into India as if something had come to India for its good."

In spite of so much extremist leadership, the Congress was considered to be in its infant stage until 1920 when Mahatma Gandhi began his role in its active politics. With the introduction of the Rowlatt Bills begins the Gandhian era in the Congress.

The long-awaited findings of the Hunter Commission appointed by the Government to conduct an enquiry into the massacre of the Jallianwala Bagh had proved quite contrary to the expectations of the Congress leaders. Mahatma Gandhi wanted to give practical shape to the Congress resentment. In the special session of the Congress held at Calcutta in September 1920, therefore, he brought forward his historic resolution on non-co-operation. Lala Lajpat Rai, freshly back from America after a long absence from India, was the president. He opposed the resolution of Mahatma Gandhi. C. R. Dass, the impressive and popular leader of Bengal, was also in alliance with him, not that he believed in the ineffectiveness of the measure but because it required the boycott of the new legislatures. The moderates had also joined hands with them, thus constituting a strong opposition bloc against the proposal of

Mahatma Gandhi. The mover sincerely advocated for several hours continuously the acceptance of his principle. Besides, he commanded the full-fledged support of Maulana Mohammad Ali and Pt. Motilal Nehru. After heated discussions therefore, when the division was challenged in the Subjects Committee, the resolution was carried by a narrow majority of seven votes ; but the final decision to start the non-co-operation movement was agreed to be made at the Nagpur Session by both the parties.

This session was held in December 1920 under the presidentship of Mr. C. Vijyaraghavacharya, a well-known Madras leader. Mr. Wedgewood Benn, the representative of the Labour Party in London, had also come to participate in this session as a delegate. This was expected to be a momentous session. Both parties had briskly canvassed during the lapse between the Calcutta Session and the Nagpur Session. When the motion came forward for discussion before the Subjects Committee, besides moderate Congress leaders Mr. Benn also offered his severest opposition. Gandhiji with his genuine sincerity later on succeeded in winning over his opponents, as a result of which the resolution was carried unanimously in the open session.

By the time the Congress was contemplating a non-violent struggle with the Government, the Muslims of India were also agitated at the peace terms of Britain with Turkey after the Great War. The pledges made by the British Prime Minister during the war, not to

deprive the Sultan of Turkey of his territories were left unredeemed and unhonoured. This violation of promises by the British Government injured the sentiments of the Indian people as a result of which the Muslim leaders joined their heads to bring pressure upon the Imperial Government to pacify the feelings of the Muslims of India by restoring the Sultan of Turkey to his pre-War position. Ganhiji was also unhappy at the injustice done to the Muslims and therefore accorded his whole-hearted support to their demands. Fortunately for the national life of our country the Mussulmans also chose to follow him and Gandhiji got an opportunity to lead the Hindus and the Muslims together in a common struggle. This united agitation constitutes a memorable chapter in the history of India's fight for freedom. Several Government title-holders resigned their honorary offices. Schools, colleges, law courts and legislatures were boycotted. At several places the people refused to pay taxes and land revenue to the Government. Open disobedience to the law was declared everywhere. People came into direct conflict with the authorities. Serious disorders and turmoil were witnessed throughout the length and breadth of the country. The movement brought practically all Congress leaders and thousands of volunteers to the jails.

The non-violent weapon had proved quite an effective one. India was awakened by it; but unfortunately in February, 1922, Mahatma Gandhi declared a sudden suspension of the civil resistance because of the Chauri

Chaura happening, where a mob of villagers had set fire to a police station with half a dozen policemen in it. This unexpected turn of events surprised the whole country as to why in spite of a very swift advance of the Congress the battle was stopped. Mahatma Gandhi boldly admitted that the self-imposed defeat was accepted by him in deference to the great principle of non-violence he had advocated throughout his life. Although the word 'Swaraj' afterwards became a popular slogan of the masses, yet the country at large was lulled because neither the Mahatma nor the Congress was able to launch any struggle for a pretty long time after this defeat until 1928 when the Simon Commission came to India.

This Commission was deputed by His Majesty's Government to study the economic, social and political conditions of the people of India and to make recommendations for the constitutional reforms to be introduced in the country. Fortunately or unfortunately its personnel did not include any representative of India. The Congress leaders believed that the study of conditions in India by a Royal Commission constituted entirely of the Imperial representatives without any Indian leader was impossible. They held sincere convictions that such a Commission would not be able to find the right sort of solution it proposed to investigate. Moreover, Lord Irwin, when reminded of this negligence, openly told the Congress that even in the face of their

boycott of it, the Commission would continue its enquiry. This challenge was hurled upon the Congress on 2nd February, 1928. The Congress High Command on the same day, just as in the case of the royal visit of the Prince of Wales earlier, declared *hartal* and boycott of the Commission. On the 3rd of February the Simon Commission landed at Bombay. The country in obedience to the wishes of her leaders expressed its unqualified displeasure by observing a complete *hartal*. Leaders were deputed throughout the length and breadth of the country wherever the Commission was expected to go to organise a successful boycott and demonstrate with black flags at the railway stations. The Government was determined to suppress the movement. Contingents of armed police were picketed at all the railway stations with orders to disperse all gatherings as were likely to create disturbance. Congressmen in their usual non-violent methods staged very peaceful black flag demonstrations. "Go Back Simon" was heard all around. Even in spite of very heavy police arrangements, the people of India conveyed a successful "Go Back" to Simon Commission. At Madras the agitating mob was fired at; L. Lajpat Rai in the Punjab and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant in U. P. received the blows of the police *lathis*. In Lucknow when the Commission was being given a party at Kaiser Bagh, several kites and balloons were thrown from the air with

the words " Go Back Simon " impressed upon them. On 31st of March the Commission left India after causing a little stir in the masses, which were at complete rest for the last six years.

At this time side by side with the non-violent agitation of the Congress, violence raised its head in the country. Terrorist activities spread all over and a number of high Government officials were fired at; a bomb was thrown even in the Legislative Assembly in Delhi.

Such were the various activities in the country. On the other hand the Lahore Congress in 1929 had once more brought the people into a conflict with the Government. Until this year the objective of the Indian National Congress remained the Dominion Status. An attempt, however, was made in 1928 at its Calcutta Session by the youth of the country to increase their demand but the elder leadership was not in its favour. A sad breach was anticipated in the Congress rank when Mahatma Gandhi moved a compromise-resolution to the effect that if the British Parliament failed to adopt the Nehru Constitution in its entirety and make a declaration of full Dominion Status for the people of India during the ensuing year, the Congress would organise non-violent non-co-operation by advising the country to refuse taxation and make complete independence as its objective in the next session. The extremist section led by Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose proposed an

amendment which vitally affected the actual resolution. He argued that the British Government had always been dodging the Indian demands by its innumerable declarations: the Congress should therefore no longer await further announcements and declare complete Independence as her immediate demand. The amendment on the merits of its objects evoked universal sympathy but the overwhelming influence wielded by Gandhiji turned down the amendment of the extremists, carrying the actual resolution by a heavy majority.

In the year of grace also when petitions and protests failed to move the hearts of the rulers, the Congress realised that India could only achieve her objective by becoming self-reliant. On the midnight of 31st December, 1929, therefore, at its Lahore Session held under the presidentship of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, on the banks of the river Ravi, the Indian National Congress solemnly declared that India would now accept nothing short of complete independence and that any constitution framed by Britain for India would not be acceptable to the people of India. This declaration was later on re-affirmed at demonstrations held throughout the length and breadth of the country on January 26. Men and women of India took solemn vows not to rest until a very good place was achieved for their motherland in the comity of free nations.

Readers would note what transitions had occurred in the Congress policy in the last three or four decades. Previously the redress of specific grievances and a greater share in administration of the country was the Congress's demand, but now a sharp change had come about. Not Dominion Status but complete severance of the British connections was the demand which came to be pressed. Hitherto they desired a greater freedom of criticism and a larger quantity of reforms from Britain but now they declared to supplant her.

How could these demands appeal to the fancy of foreigners? There was certainly no chance for them to be accepted; because the events of the past had shown beyond doubt that freedom is never given by charitable concessions but always won. The expected "no" therefore was heard from the British Press, British statesmen and above all from the British Parliament though not in clear terms. Lord Irwin the Viceroy with full authority of His Majesty's Government repeated their declaration of 1917. There was nothing new in the announcement. Naturally it had no fascination for the Indian nationalists. Mahatma Gandhi therefore was persuaded once more to give a trial to his weapon of civil disobedience. Government also adopted innumerable tactics to extinguish the flames of patriotism burning in the hearts of masses. Repression was let loose to crush the movement. Thousands of men, women

and children were sent to jail. All the Congress Committees, Naujawan Bharat Sabhas and other political bodies were declared illegal. The number of persons ready to go to jail grew so large that special jails had to be erected. All the leaders of the country were imprisoned. The Viceroy made frequent use of his special powers and promulgated several ordinances with the object to crush the movement. Many young men were sentenced to death or transportation for life in the several conspiracy cases conducted in India and many detention and concentration camps were opened in the country.

When all these measures failed to check the rising tide of the masses the British Parliament for the appeasement of Indian opinion held a Round Table Conference at London where representatives of all the important political organisations were invited. The Congress, as a protest against the continued repressive policy of the Government of India, refused to take part in it. In the absence of the greatest political organization therefore, the conference ended in an utter failure. The Government now took an initiative for peace. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. M.R. Jayakar acted as the messengers. On March 5, 1931, through the efforts of these well-known peace-makers the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was signed which provided for the unconditional release of all the political prisoners while Mahatma Gandhi agreed to suspend the Civil Disobedience Movement and take part in the Second Round Table Conference.

He participated in its deliberations as the sole representative of the Indian National Congress; but this second conference also did not yield any fruitful result on account of the usual policy of 'Divide and Rule' which was actively followed by the British statesmen On his return therefore, Mahatma Gandhi resumed the Civil Disobedience Movement which continued till 1934

(4)

A year later the Parliament designed the "Government of India Act, 1933," the first instalment of which was to be introduced in India on the 1st April, 1937. The extremists in the Congress were opposed to the acceptance of Provincial Autonomy, the first part of the Constitution, while the "Old Guard' of the Congress showed some inclination to accept it Pandit Jawaharlal in his presidential address at the Lucknow Congress in 1936 openly declared that the new Constitution even if it was accompanied with the Crown of Heaven would not be acceptable to the people of India. The Congress, however, desired to measure its strength. It therefore contested the provincial elections and was able to create a solid majority in seven out of the eleven provinces in India.

At the achievement of these amazing results, the right wingers pleaded for the acceptance of ministerial offices, while the left wingers were of the opinion that the Congress majorities in seven provinces should create

such situations in the Assemblies that the Governors could find no other alternatives but to dissolve the Constitution. Pandit Jawaharlal, who seriously advocated the constitutional deadlocks, threatened to resign from his presidential post in case the Congress decided in favour of office acceptance, while Mr. Satyamurthi declared that he would directly issue an appeal to the country if the Congress rejected the opportunity. A serious breach in the Congress ranks was expected. Both, parties were busy in issuing statements and rejoinders in the press and on public platforms when Mahatma Gandhi, who enjoyed the confidence of both parties, found out a formula for this intricate problem too.

A special Convention of the Congress was summoned at Delhi under the presidentship of the Congress President to decide this important issue. Members of all the Provincial Assemblies returned on Congress tickets were asked to attend it. Mahatmaji put a proposal before the Convention that offices might be accepted provided the Governors of their respective provinces gave assurance to the leaders of the Congress parties in the Provincial Assemblies that they would not interfere in the day-to-day administration of the Provincial Ministers. This could be the only wisest decision at such a time. It was, therefore, readily accepted by both parties in sporting spirit.

Apart from the assurances given by the Provincial Governors, Lord Linlithgow, the Governor-General,

made an announcement, sounding a general assurance, whereupon Congress Ministries were formed in six provinces of India. Later the Frontier Province also had a Congress Ministry and so had Assam for some time.

The exemplary capability in which the Congress ministries functioned, the incalculable popularity that they gained and the unique administrative efficiency that they displayed during their short stay in the office had silenced for all times those irresponsible British statesmen who were never weary of challenging the administrative capability of Indians. Notwithstanding the serious handicaps and innumerable loopholes in the Government of India Act the non-violent non-co-operators of India set forth a model of administration before the country and gave the people a specimen of the future government in a free India. With very limited revenues at their disposal they not only provided excellently adequate relief to the suppressed agriculturists and the down-trodden labourers of the country but also fought ceaselessly against the evils of drinking, illiteracy and ignorance. As a matter of fact the magic wand of John Bull, which had been successfully waved till now to mislead the civilized world, lost all its charm, and the Congress ministries rent clear the veil of hypocrisy which the foreign rulers of India had successfully cast over their activities.

Again after some months a breach in the Congress seemed inevitable at the desire of the British Govern-

ment to introduce Federation—the second part of the Government of India Act. Although to the present Federal scheme as envisaged in the Act the whole of the Congress with one voice was opposed yet the right wingers were inclined to accept it if some amendments, as suggested by them, were made in it. Serious breach in Congress ranks was again anticipated, but by this time the fire-brand in the Congress—the born extremist politician of India—Babu Subhas Chandra Bose, had been elected to occupy the presidential chair of the Indian National Congress, who from the very birth of the scheme was fiercely opposed to it.

This new President is the hero of these pages. A narrative of his life, his sacrifices for the country, his aims and ideals and his activities in the political field will be sketched, and how, for the dignity of his principle, at one time he revolted against the greatest empire of the world and at another time against his own colleagues would be revealed in the following few chapters of this book.

CHAPTER II

THE PATRIOT

In the history of the struggle for Indian independence Bengal occupies a unique position in the provinces of India. It has not only played a very prominent role in strengthening the foundations of the Indian National Congress, but has always made the most valuable contribution towards the fight for the emancipation of the country. The people of this province can rightly be called the inspirers of the national movement in India. In appearance they are quiet-minded, mild, gentle and refined but in fact they are sensitive patriots of most astounding character. They would never shrink from making the supremest of sacrifices towards the cause of their motherland. Generally they are emotional in nature. With the slightest of excitement therefore they would at once resort to bombs and revolvers. These brilliant and intellectual but tragic and fascinating people never hesitated to commit the most desperate deeds of violence when they thought the cause of the

country required it. Sir John Anderson, the Governor of Bengal, had rightly admitted that " terrorism is the perverted expression of the extreme love of the Bengali race for their motherland." They at once come to direct and immediate action, preach violence on their religious platforms, and introduce inflaming language in their organs.

The country is indebted to this province because it gave to the Congress such great leaders as Bepin Chandra Pal, Arbindo Ghosh, Deshbandhu C. R. Das, J. M Sen-Gupta and lastly Subhas Chandra Bose.

These are some few distinguished traditions and daring precedents of the land which gave birth to Mr. Bose.

(2)

Subhas Chandra was born on 23rd January, 1897, at Cuttack, the capital city of modern Orissa. His father Rai Janaki Nath Bose Bahadur, on account of his inherited intelligence and excellent capability in the profession of law, had been a public prosecutor, the leader of the bar, and the chairman of the District Board and Municipality of Cuttack for a fairly long time. His mother Shrimati Prabhabati Bose, a religious-minded lady with excellent simple habits, always took the greatest care in bringing up her children to the simplest mode of living. Besides five sisters he has got half a dozen brothers, all of whom have settled themselves into life with distinguished careers as lawyers, councillors and medical practi-

tioners and all of them, perhaps with the exception of none, have suffered heavily in the cause of their country. Amongst all his brothers Sarat Chandra Bose from his very childhood fostered extreme love for Subhas. In childhood as well as in their after-lives both brothers stood by each other in all situations. Even in the recent presidential crisis when Subhas had received unkindly treatment from the entire leadership of the country, his elder brother Sarat Chandra, who at that time was the leader of Opposition in the Bengal Legislative Assembly, proved to be his great comrade and both brothers jointly shouldered this historic isolation.

The boy had many promising traits and large was reposed in him but nobody could predict at that time that Subhas Bose would one day in his after-life become a formidable foe of the British domination in India and would make the smooth working of bureaucracy in India impossible according to the desire of its authors.

(3)

Subhas Bose received his primary education in a Protestant European School, furnished and designed in the western fashion. But all his countrymen are not equally fortunate. Education in India like so many other necessities of life is not a thing of easy reach for many of her children. Social orders in this country have been shaped in such a form and the distribution of the capital has so wrongly been made

that the middle-class purses are being emptied very speedily and the treasuries of the big mill-owners and landlords have assumed the magnetic attraction for them. The economic situation in the country has not only affected the social, moral and political status of our countrymen but has also deprived the majority of her children of their very birthright to get proper education. The system of education as designed by our rulers is so greatly defective that whereas magnificent colleges, grand universities and richly furnished schools are provided for the boys of the rich people there is absolutely no arrangement for the commonest people—the sons and daughters of cultivators and labourers. The pity is that the undeserving and generally the spoilt children of the capitalists have got very vast fields to get education in all spheres of the world and for the real deserving boys of the farmers there is no arrangement even for primary education. It is merely this lack of real goodwill on the part of our rulers that we cannot possibly expect persons in India who could rise from the " Log Cabin to the White House " or who could come out from a hermitage and reach to the position of occupying " Downing Street Offices."

To resume the thread of narration the boy completed seven years of his studies at this institution and was then admitted to the Ravenshaw Collegiate School, from where he passed his Matriculation Examination very creditably holding the second position in

whole of the University. It is generally believed even in these days that there is always very little chance for the students from such luxurious schools to win distinctions in the academic field. His success, therefore, was most creditable and brilliantly achieved.

All the geniuses of the world who rose to sublime heights in their after-lives got their inspiration either from their cradles or from their school desks.

It is said about Abraham Lincoln, the well-known President of the U. S. A. who rose from a poor man's cottage to this eminent position, that he owed his greatness to his distinguished mother, who for hours used to narrate to boy Lincoln the stories of great patriots of the world who laid down their lives in the service of their countries and impressed upon him that selfless service to one's country is the greatest of all the virtues.

Similarly history is full of the stories of great men who, inspired by their worthy teachers, completed tremendous tasks and stirred the imagination of the world in their later lives.

Boy Subhas was gifted with both—the religious virtues of a pious mother and patriotic inspiration of his learned head master Beni Babu—and above all he was endowed with the company of a noble friend, Hamanta Kumar who had always been a source of inspiration to him in his childhood as well as in his after-life.

In the year 1913, he got admission in the Presi-

dency College, Calcutta, but his lofty ideals from his very childhood caused the immediate termination of his college studies. Unlike his other fellow students his interests were mainly intellectual. He was a discontented and ambitious boy and in spite of the fact that he was possessed of all the privileges that a born aristocrat could claim he developed natural hatred for materialism and became a student of truth and religion at the age of thirteen.

At such a tender age when the boys in the Indian streets play in the slums of the cities, when the students in the schools blindly follow in the footsteps of parents in all spheres of life having absolutely no power of self-realisation, this Bengali boy cultivated the habits of self-renunciation in the solitary corners of his home. When he was hardly fourteen years old, he began a thorough study of Rama Krishna Paramhansa Mission under the guidance of Swami Vivekanand. Absorbed deeply in the ideas of eternal peace and salvation, in the winter days of 1914 he decided once for all to forsake the pleasures of the world, gave up the rich living and ran away into the heart of a jungle amidst the valleys of Himalayas in search of some spiritual teacher. He had heard several stories of Indian Divines, who attained their religious objectives in the midst of Himalayas. So like a second Buddha, he left his home on a religious errand and made his way towards the glorious resorts of the great Rishis of the past.

Exactly at a time when the great Mahatma Gandhi of to-day had not as yet taken to his well-known *langoti* but was a young barrister thinking of making fortunes, when the young Nehru was as yet busy in his playground at Harrow and Cambridge and when Jamnalal Bajaj was as yet a Rao Bahadur, busy in accumulating wealth, this great *sadhu* wandered alone in a state of self-mortification in search of a spiritual teacher and guide.

His parents who had reposed large in the boy to build a prosperous future as a Government official were very anxious at his disappearance. For many days the regularity and tranquillity of the family was lost. Several winter days and nights he spent in the heart of dangerous zones without sufficient clothing or food, living entirely on natural resources.

In the midst of the dark, dreadful nights when the whole world would go to sleep except the ailing or the criminal, at such a time when dreadful animals come out of their caves in search for their prey, when roaring waves of the rivers and freezing breezes of jungle thrill the strongest of the hearts. the boy wandered alone in the dreadful places without any fear. He spent full six months there, wandering from place to place in a religious fervour like a great devotee, visited the ancient Hindu temples at Bindra Ban. Benares and Gaya, studied the private lives of the *mahants* there, found them more luxurious and be-

sotted than the ordinary human beings, got disappointed and therefore made his way back towards home.

Scenes of his home return were most dramatic. Everybody was sitting in the drawing-room when he suddenly made his entry into it First of all he proceeded to his mother, who was perhaps the most aggrieved member of the family and touched the dust of her feet as a sign of respect. The mother wept bitterly and in mixed feelings of love and agony of separation she uttered : " You have been born to kill me, Subhas." The gloomy atmosphere of the drawing-room at once presented a touching sight. Parents embraced their dear son, friends and colleagues welcomed their worthy comrade and whole of the family rejoiced at the return of the most lovable figure of the house.

It was not in a fit of sentiments alone that Subhas left his home, nor was there any other momentary reason for his doing so but he was an inspired boy having a definite and set mission before him. In a letter to one of his friends, soon after his return in 1915, Subhas wrote, " I have been realizing day by day that I have got a definite mission in my life and for that I am bearing the body and I am not to drift in the current of popular opinion. People will speak well or ill—this is the way of the world—but my sublime self-consciousness consists in this that I am not moved by it."

This adventure took toll of his health. Habituated

to princely living as he was, he could not stand the difficulties of wild life. On return, therefore, he fell ill and remained on bed for a long time.

Soon after recovery in 1915 he rejoined his college and passed 1st division F.A. without much difficulty; but his studies for the Degree classes were again interrupted by an incident.

Here in the Presidency College, one of the European professors, Mr C. F. Oaten, who had more than his share of the Britisher's imperialist pride, treated the Indian students in a most insolent manner which they resented.

National self-respect was very dear to Subhas Bose. He was enraged at the continued high-handedness of this professor. One day Mr. Oaten in his usual pride gave slap on the face of a Degree student. This was a most improper action in a college. As a matter of fact the professor's attitude was intolerable and provoking. Subhas was filled with indignation at this behaviour of the professor. He held secret meetings with the other students and at last succeeded in persuading them to resort to complete strike till the college authorities took some action against the professor. Subhas was leading the strike successfully which forced the College Committee to agree to an arbitration honourable to the students. For some time after this happening the professor remained cautious but he did not completely give up his old ways. Later, he once again insulted the Indian students. Some Bengali young men at this thrashed

Mr. Oaten as a retaliation. The Principal, for fear of future indiscipline, took disciplinary action against some students. Subhas, who was always known to be the leader of the college students, was accused of a leading part in this beating incident too. He was expelled from the Calcutta University for a period of two years. Some others too were expelled along with him.

It was not to be expected at that time that this tiny leader of the Presidency College, Calcutta, who was expelled from the University for a period of two years on the charge of leading the students to maintain their national self-respect and dignity, would one day in his after-life be thrown behind the bars and dungeon cells of Andamans on the charge of leading his countrymen towards self-determination and independence.

After the lapse of complete two years, he joined the Scottish Church College of Calcutta and passed his Degree examination in 1919 with first class Honours in Philosophy. During this time he joined the University Infantry which had been newly formed to give military training to Bengali students and received many distinctions there.

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This was the time when the Rowlatt Bills, the Punjab tragedies and the Khilafat questions were agitating the minds of the entire country. Feelings

of natural hatred had been created between the rulers and the ruled. The rulers had shown an entire lack of mercy towards the people, while the people scorned their alien rulers as a result of non-appreciation of their services in the Great War.

Young men were being inspired with enthusiasm over the wholesale arrests and long convictions of popular leaders, merciless firing of peaceful meetings, and crushing punishments and public floggings at several places.

Subhas Bose's parents who were fully familiar with his emotional and daring habits and who were already afraid of his extraordinary ways were anxious now to make him busy immediately after his success in the B.A. examination lest he should be inspired to indulge in similar activities. They, therefore, offered him to go to England to sit for the I.C.S. examination. They had perhaps expected that the beauties of London would attract him and he would settle down into life like many an Indian young man who is so attracted.

Subhas was perturbed very much at this offer. The tragedies of Martial Law regime in the Punjab and a policy of wholesale repression throughout the country was before his eyes. The patriotic feelings in him forbade him to accept the offer to sit for the I.C.S. but his friend Hamanta Kumar who saw in him the making of a great man advised him not to abandon this offer of proceeding to England. To this advice Subhas who

had a definite mission in life replied: "But there will be a great difficulty if I come out successful in the Civil Service competition. Then I shall lose sight of my ideal." At last he reluctantly decided to accept the offer and in a letter to his friend gave expression to his sentiments under which he agreed to proceed to England. "The last few days," he wrote, "have been spent in a mental storm. After great fight within myself I gave my consent to go to England (for the I.C.S.) but could not console my mind that my decision had been right."

This is how Subhas, for the first time, left for England. He was fully conscious of his sublime ideal when he left the Indian shores, and quite contrary to what was expected by his parents the charm of the Western world failed to attract him His thoughts took different turn and dwelt on the poverty and misery of his own country. On the one hand he saw people enjoying civil liberties, breathing free airs, young men sketching their future liberally, children getting free military and academical training, while on the other poverty-stricken children struggling for their existence from the very childhood; civil liberties, civilisation, culture and education entirely at the mercy of a foreign race; young men focussing their attention on the threshold of Government offices with no sense to form their own future. He was awakened to imagine the terrible state of his country. At all times, therefore, during his stay at London he looked

carefully to the working of British Imperialism and their methods of exploitation.

From his very college days Subhas was always pained and distressed when he saw India humiliated and it always pleased him immensely to see India honoured and Indians respected. The Oaten thrashing incident in the Presidency College was one evidence in support of this assumption and a couple of letters that he dropped to one of his friends in India was the second testimony. "I feel most happy when I see white people serve me and brush my shoes." This was what he expressed in his first letter to Mr. Hamanta Kumar from Fitz William Hall, Cambridge, in November 1919, and in another letter he made a mention of the annual dinner of the Indian Majlis at London where Mrs. Ray and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu had delivered brilliant speeches in the presence of huge audience of English and Indian gentry.

Glorifying over their speeches he wrote, "When Mrs. Sarojini Naidu made a speech here my heart was filled with pride. I saw that day an Indian woman had such culture, education and qualities as would stand her in good stead before the West." "From this I came to the conclusion," he added, "the country which produces such women could not but have a bright future."

Such were the ideas of this noble son of India at London during his student career. India and her honour

his side the sanest politicians in the country but neither his asceticism nor his political skill could cast any sound impression on Mr. Bose's mind in their very first political interview. While giving expression to his views about this interview Mr. Bose once wrote, " My reason told me clearly, again and again. that there was a deplorable lack of clarity in the plan which the Mahatma had formulated and that he himself did not have a clear idea of the successive stage of the campaign which would bring India to her cherished goal of freedom. "

As soon as he reached Calcutta he at once proceeded to Deshbandhu's house to have an exchange of ideas. Deshbandhu C. R. Dass had been in his time one of the most outstanding and impressive personalities in Indian politics. He was known to be the best friend of youth in the country. He fully understood their aspirations and sympathised with their shortcomings. He heard Subhas most patiently and assured him of all possible encouragement. The young man was fully convinced and thererore decided to follow his lead.

CHAPTER III

THE PRISONER

It was at the end of 1921 when Subhas entered the active politics of the Congress The non-co-operation movement of Mahatma Gandhi had recently started on its course. A great number of lawyers and doctors had ceased their practices and some other people had left their jobs. Many students in all the provinces had discontinued their studies at the command of their accredited leader, Mahatma Gandhi. The Congress therefore felt the responsibility of making substitute arrangements for the students who discontinued their studies voluntarily or were thrown out of colleges for participating in the movement. National colleges were started in several provinces under the guidance and personal supervision of the leaders of the respective places.

The National College in the Punjab was put under the charge of the most deeply respected leader, Lala Lajpat Rai, while the management of the National

College in Calcutta was given over to Mr. C. R. Dass who being confident of the remarkable ability and excellent character of Subhas shifted this responsibility on to his shoulders.

To a general reader it might appear that Subhas Bose's stay in Europe was merely for educational reasons but this is not the real fact. He had lived in that foreign land much less as a student of I C.S. than as a student of international politics. He had gathered a vast store of experience from the European Universities and now he had got a chance to practise them in his own country in the capacity of Principal of the National College in Calcutta. Unlike other Government-aided colleges the first lesson that was given to the students here was that of patriotism and sacrifice. The young Principal had worked a great deal to infuse the spirit of freedom in the hearts of the students. Moreover the far-sighted and wise guidance of the veteran leader Mr. C. R. Dass was also available to them. The result was that the college produced men who not only had received literary and intellectual training, but had also imbibed in them a spirit of deep nationalism and self-sacrifice.

For some time of course the National Colleges were tolerated in India but soon the Government grew anxious and the policy of discouragement came forth. The Bengal Government was gravely concerned to note the activities of the Principal and got anxious to "nip the evil in the bud."

The inevitable came soon. The Indian National Congress decided to boycott all the functions in connection with the visit of the Prince of Wales to India. The country had been enraged at the breaking of war-time pledges by the Government, Jallianwala Bagh shooting and the promulgation of the Rowlatt Act. As an expression of their resentment against the Government's policy the leaders declared a boycott of the visit of the Prince. It was a tragic situation. The very leaders, who during the war had worked zealously to aid and canvass recruits for Britain, now boycotted the eldest son of His Majesty and the future Emperor of India.

The Prince was to arrive in India on November 17, 1921. It was decided to wave black flags and observe complete *hartal* at the time of his visit. The authorities proclaimed that the Prince had come to acknowledge the aid that India had given to the Empire in the Great War and to express his thanks to the people on behalf of the King-Emperor. The day he landed at Bombay Mahatma Gandhi proclaimed a day of boycott instead of one of celebrations. The country responded to the voice of the leader. Wherever the Prince went, the citizens remaining within the constitutional limits, exhibited their disapproval of British policy. According to the programme the Prince was to visit Calcutta on the 25th of December.

As a precautionary measure, a month earlier the

National Volunteer Corps in Bengal was declared illegal. Subhas Chandra Bose was in charge of the organisation at the time. Bengal Provincial Congress Committee in collaboration with the Provincial Khilafat Committee decided to defy the order as a result of which all the prominent leaders of the province including Deshbandhu Dass, his wife, his son, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad—an outstanding Muslim divine of Calcutta, and Mr. Subhas Bose were arrested and sentenced to different terms of imprisonment. Government was now confident that this great palatial city of India would accord a right royal welcome to the Prince but it happened just the other way. Deshbandhu C. R. Dass gave a stirring message to Bengal: "I feel the handcuffs on my wrists and the weight of iron chains on my body. It is the agony of bondage The whole of India is a vast prison. The work of the Congress must be carried on. What matters whether I am taken or left? What matters whether I am dead or alive?"

This message of the veteran leader of Bengal along with the strenuous efforts of Subhas had created quite a psychological atmosphere for a complete *hartal*.

As soon as the Prince alighted at Howrah Junction and made his way towards the city, the busy commercial centres of the magnificent city were found turned into deserted places and the city as a whole presented the atmosphere of unbounded sorrow and gloom. The magnificent buildings instead of being

decorated with Union Jacks were exhibiting the black flags hung over their balconies. In short the residents of Calcutta, under the leadership of Subhas Bose, conveyed to the heir to the Imperial Throne that the country was not satisfied with the policy of the British Government.

As a reaction to all these demonstrations at the royal visit all the prominent leaders of the country were arrested and imprisoned. Subhas was also convicted for the first time for a period of six months on the same grounds. He was expecting a longer sentence and when the magistrate announced the punishment he was surprised and exclaimed, "Six months only! Have I then robbed a fowl?"

After undergoing his full term of imprisonment Subhas Bose was released in September, 1922. At this time a great calamity had befallen the people of Bengal. Thousands of men, women and children were rendered homeless and several villages were swept away by the floods in the north of the province. Jail experiences were new to him no doubt but they could not discourage his spirit. He was pained to hear the horrible tales of flood-stricken people and immediately rushed to the flooded area with a batch of volunteers and busied himself in organising a Relief Fund for the victims. A flood relief committee was formed with Sir P. C. Ray, the famous chemist and philanthropist of Calcutta, as its president. Besides large contributions in cloth,

foodstuffs and fodder for the cattle, a magnificent fund of 4,00,000 rupees was raised without any active support from the Government. Later the Bengal Government also contributed Rs. 20,000. In a very short period adequate relief was provided to the sufferers. Lord Lytton who was very greatly impressed with his great humanitarian work, in an interview personally complimented Subhas Bose and appreciated his efforts.

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Subhas Babu's career in the Congress begins in the year 1922. The annual session of the Congress was held in December at Gaya under the presidentship of Mr. C. R. Dass. This was one of the most important sessions of the Congress in that there occurred a serious breach in the Congress ranks on the question of entry into the legislatures. The President of the session always held the sincere belief that the entry into the legislatures could lead the Congress more quickly towards self-government than their boycott. On this question in spite of holding admittedly extreme views Deshbandhu did not hesitate even to enter into a compromise with the Moderates who blindly accepted the principle of the announcement of 1917. The result was that Swaraj Party was formed within the Congress and C. R. Dass was elected its leader. The programme of the party was to contest elections for the Central as well as the

Provincial Legislatures.

Subhas Babu who was known to be his political lieutenant was given the work of placing the views of the party before the country. *Forward*, a daily in English, was also started to propagate its views and the chief editorship of the organ was entrusted to Subhas. As a result of his excellent handling of both the duties the Swarajists were returned in overwhelmingly large numbers to both the Central and the Provincial Legislatures These amazing results in the elections had not only won Subhas a special place in the heart of the great leader of Bengal, Deshbandhu C R. Dass, but also in these of his countrymen.

In 1924 the Swarajists contested the elections of the Calcutta Corporation and secured a solid majority in it. Deshbandhu was elected its Mayor and Subhas Babu was appointed the Chief Executive Officer on a salary of Rs 1,500/- a month. Prior to his appointment the salary of the Executive Officer of Calcutta Corporation was Rs 3,000/- but with a view to adopt measures for the public welfare he voluntarily reduced it to this amount. He was at that time only twenty-seven years. Many people who were jealous of his ever-increasing popularity objected to his appointment to such a responsible post at such a young age. The Government also felt reluctant to approve the appointment and " it was not without a great deal of hesitation that they

decided to give their approval, as they were required to do under the Statute."

This young Executive Officer, no doubt, had already gained immense popularity in his unofficial capacity throughout the province for his service and sacrifice, but now being at the helm of a Municipal Corporation of the first city in the country he brought about such sanitary, educational and other beneficient reforms by working day and night that he began to be loved by all The major portion of his pay was always distributed among the poor boys in the form of stipends and allowances which won him great love and esteem.

A shrewd politician and an able administrator endowed with intellect and power when successfully enlists the support of a trusted ally gifted with unique efficiency for organisation, the result of such a fortunate alliance can better be imagined than explained. With the capture of the Calcutta Municipality by the Swarajists exactly a similar combination appeared in Deshbandhu and Subhas. The entire system of administration was changed The bureaucratic administration had yielded place to a popular one. The newly elected Swarajist Councillors and Aldermen, including the Mayor, all came dressed in home-made Khadi. Khadi and Swadeshi became the official dress of the Corporation. Municipal parks, streets and roads began to be named after India's great men. Custom of presenting

civic receptions to the Viceroys, Governors and officials was discontinued and instead nationalist leaders, when they visited the city, were given such honours. Education Department was for the first time started to provide free primary education to the citizens. Besides free medical dispensaries a milk-kitchen for supplying free milk to the poor children was established. The departmental heads of the Corporation who were chiefly Britishers, for the first time began to realize that they were public servants and not masters. And if any officer yet felt racial or official superiority the Swarajist Executive Officer proved strong enough to deal with him.

The Imperial Government could not allow such solid national workers to go on with their activities for any indefinite period He had hardly remained in office for six months, when on the morning of 25th October 1924, the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Calcutta, roused him from his bed and showing the warrant arrested him under the Bengal Ordinance.

This Ordinance was promulgated by the Viceroy on the midnight of October 24 with a view to provide powers to the Bengal Government to arrest and imprison persons without trial. On the very next morning it was brought into force. The police rounded up a large number of Congressmen in the province and made a clean sweep including several prominent members of the Bengal

Legislative Council. Beyond this that the Swarajists were responsible for bringing the bureaucratic regime to a sad end in Bengal, the reason for these wholesale arrests was not to be known. In the words of Subhas himself, "the public notion at that time was that the pressure of the Swarajists in the local bodies (especially the Calcutta Municipality), in the legislatures and at Tarakeswar had unnerved the Government," and the "official circles came out with the excuse that a revolutionary conspiracy was on foot and the arrests had to be made before anything serious happened."

Subhas had during the visit of the Prince of Wales, Swarajists' elections and in the capacity of Executive Officer so much popularised himself that the authorities found themselves in a very difficult position to keep him behind the prison walls without any trial. The public raised a very strong clamour against the arrest of their popular leader while on the other hand the *Statesman* and the *Englishman*, the two leading Anglo-Indian dailies of Calcutta, strongly exhorted the authorities for his detention on the plea that he was "the brain of the revolutionary conspiracy."

These allegations of the Anglo-Indian dailies caused great indignation in the Congress circles and a defamation case was brought against them. There was no documentary evidence available to the papers to justify their allegations; they

therefore sought the support of the Intelligence Branch of the Bengal Police to obtian proofs to substantiate the charges levelled against him and a similar attempt was also made to secure the assistance of India Office in London. The proceedings dragged on for several months but the defence being highly influential no legal action was taken against them.

The sudden arrest of the Chief Executive Officer had naturally dislocated the entire work of the Corporation and the authorities found no other alternative but to allow him to carry on the municipal work within the prison walls till some other substitute arrangement was made. For full two months his secretary was allowed to take the office files to him from time to time to dispose off the pending cases in the escort of a police officer.

Deshbandhu, who had a strong ally in Subhas, felt the prosecution more than anybody else. He made a forceful speech from the Mayoral Chair in the Corporation in which he hurled a challenge to the Bengal Government accepting full responsibility for what the Chief Executive Officer had done and invited the Government to arrest him also on similar grounds. The authorities felt very much embarrassed at the strong public agitation and within one month of his arrest began to consider seriously about his release; but in his release lay a strong hit to the prestige of the police, so the consideration was dropped and he was transferred to Alipore Jail.

Hardly had he undergone his detention for three months in Alipore and Brahmpore jails when on January 25, 1925, sudden orders were issued for his deportation to Mandalay In the cover of darkness, the next evening, under the special escort of Mr. Lowman, Assistant Inspector-General of Police, and a contingent of armed police, Subhas Chandra Bose along with seven other comrades was taken out of Calcutta in a prison van.

The patriots welcomed their deportation to Mandalay jails which were built to terrify and discourage offenders--political or criminal, and deemed it a pride to live in them. Subhas Bose, once narrating at greater length the detailed account of his deportation wrote : 'But I remembered distinctly that it was the place where Lokmanya Tilak had been imprisoned for nearly six years and later on Lala Jajpat Rai for about a year. It gave us, therefore, some consolation and pride to feel that we were following in their footsteps."

When the news of his deportation was conveyed to his parents, his father uttered, "We are proud of Subhas."

(3)

There is one very important incident connected with his prison life in Burma. Durga Puja is a national festival of Bengal which is celebrated every year in every home and corner of the world wherever a Bengali family is found. In 1925, it fell due on

October 25. In their natural instinct to join the nation in the celebration the eight Bengali State prisoners who were characterised as "eight of the most dangerous men in India" by Mr. Patterson, a Prison Commissioner from England, applied for funds and necessary facilities to celebrate Durga Puja festival.

Major Findlay, the Superintendent, was willing to accede to their desire even on his own responsibility but the Government did not seem to agree to it as a result of which the entire set resorted to hunger-strike in February, 1926. The news somehow leaked out and caused a terrible storm of public indignation. Within less than a fortnight the authorities came to their knees and orders were issued to sanction necessary funds and facilities for their religious celebrations in future.

For over two years the Government kept silence in the matter of his release. The people of Bengal repeatedly demanded his trial in an open court but the Government did not move in the matter. In November 1926 the Bengal Congress adopted another course. The fresh elections to the Bengal Legislative Council were to take place in this month. Subhas Chandra Bose and Mr. S. C. Mitra, another of his fellow prisoners, were offered two different constituencies by the Bengal Congress which they readily accepted and even in spite of very strong opponents both were returned by thumping majorities. A

heavy pressure was put upon the authorities in the legislature as well as outside it either to release both the State prisoners or send them for trial but neither of the two happened and their incarceration continued.

. The inconveniences of Mandalay Jail are well known to the students of Indian politics. Whenever leaders returned from its confinement they related their experiences in the press and on the platform. It is talked of as a living hell on earth. Subhas Babu was never familiar with such atmosphere; he, therefore, fell seriously ill. In a very short time, his lungs were affected with an attack of broncho-pneumonia and his weight reduced by 40 lbs. By the April of 1927, he was absolutely unable to move from bed. Doctors were unanimous in their opinion that his health was in positive danger. The people of Bengal therefore started a powerful agitation for his unconditional release.

The Government at this transferred him to Rangoon and deputed a medical board consisting of Lieut.-Col. Kelsall and his brother Dr. Sunil Chandra Bose. On their joint recommendation the Government made an offer in the Bengal Legislative Council that he could be allowed to proceed to Switzerland for medical treatment at his own expense provided he promised not to stay at any Indian port but proceeded directly from Rangoon. Mr. Bose in spite of his being in very serious physical deterioration was not the least tempted by this offer and preferred to risk death than to get a conditional release.

The authorities, when they failed in their attempt to receive any assurance from Mr. Bose, found no other alternative but to order his unconditional release. As a matter of fact they were afraid of shouldering the risk of loss of the young inspiration of Bengal. They desired to escape this heavy responsibility. On the morning of the 15th May 1927, he was brought back on a boat sailing from Rangoon which was anchored near Diamond Harbour at the mouth of the river Hooghly. He was made to alight at the launch of His Excellency the Governor of Bengal where another medical board consisting of Dr. Sir Nilratan Sircar, Dr. B. C. Roy, Lieut.-Col. Sands and Major Hungstan, I.M.S., Special physician to His Excellency, examined him That day he spent in the same launch and the next morning the Chief of the Intelligence Branch of Police showed him a telegram conveying his unconditional release. So on the 16th of May, 1927, after a long incarceration of about three years, he was set at liberty. When he was taken into custody he was a healthy, youthful and vigorous Executive Officer of the Calcutta Corporation but when he was released he was no better than a done-up and wrecked consumptive, unable to move from his bed, with health, vigour and energy completely gone. These are the blessings of Mandalay 'Heavens.'

By this time the tragic and merciless hand of death had snatched away from the country Deshbandhu C. R. Dass, the hero of Swarajist Campaigns

and the outstanding leader of Bengal. The people of Bengal, were naturally looking upto Subhas Bose to lead the province. For some time after his release, therefore, he remained in bed but soon after attaining normal health he resumed his political activities. The people of Bengal, as a token of their respect for his remarkable political genius and innumerable sacrifices at this young age, elected him President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and thus appointed him a successor to Deshbandhu Dass.

About six months after his release the annual session of the Indian National Congress was held at Madras under the presidentship of Dr. Ansari, the veteran Muslim leader of Delhi

The contingent of Bengal delegates, used to be led previously by Deshbandhu, had now attended the session under the leadership of Subhas Bose where he was appointed as the General Secretary of the Congress along with Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and our Sahib Qureshi.

(4)

The year 1928 has got special significance attached to it inasmuch as several sittings of Nehru Committee and All-Parties Conference were held this year to thrash out the principles of new constitution. Also an Imperial Commission which goes by the name of Simon Commission came to India to study the social, economic and political conditions of the country and to watch "up to what extent it is

desirable to establish the principles of responsible government" in the country.

The Nehru Committee by considerable majority adopted Dominion Status as the basis of the constitution "without restricting the liberty of action of those political parties whose goal was complete independence."

The All-Parties Conference held at Lucknow adopted the report of the Nehru Committee but the hot-blooded in them were fiercely opposed to it. Men like Subhas Bose were not interested in the constitutional quibbles of the elderly leaders. They were not satisfied with the outcome of this conference and specially its recognition of Dominion Status as India's goal. The leftists held a private meeting at Lucknow and at the instance of Pandit Jawaharlal and Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose it was decided that instead of dividing the house a separate body by the name of Independence League should be formed with a view to protest against the decisions of Nehru Committee and consequently of the All-Parties Conference.

Subhas Bose for the first time raised the banner of revolt here and took a bold stand against the compromising tendency visible in the Congress programme.

The second important event of the year was the arrival of the Simon Commission in India. The

Indian National Congress decided to content itself with mere black flag demonstrations and the boycott of all the functions connected with it. Subhas Bose, who is a radical force in himself, and who in whole of his life stood for a decisive struggle with the British Imperialism stressed upon Gandhiji to give a positive lead to the country at the arrival of the Simon Commission.

In his own words, "There is absolutely no doubt that if the Congress Working Committee had taken courage in both hands, they could have anticipated the movement of 1930 by two years and the appointment of the Simon Commission could have, made the starting point of such movement." When the writer (Mr. Bose) visited the Mahatma in May 1928, at his Ashram at Sabarmati, he reported to him the enthusiasm which he had met in many provinces and begged him to come out of his retirement and give a lead to the country. At that time the reply of the Mahatma was that he did not see any light, though before his very eyes the peasantry of Bardoli were demonstrating through a no-tax campaign that they were ready for a struggle."

The enthusiasm mentioned above by Mr. Bose was no other than what he had witnessed at a number of conferences that he had attended during the last five or six months. In May 1928, he presided over the Maharashtra Provincial Conference at Poona. In August of the same year he attended the All-Bengal Students' Conference at Calcutta held under the

presidentship of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and in December he welcomed the 1st session of the All-India Youth Congress at Calcutta under the Presidentship of Mr. K. F. Nariman, an outstanding left wing Parsi leader of Bombay. Special significance must be given to this conference since Mr. Bose made his first public utterance against the cult and doctrines of Gandhiji in the conference as the Chairman of the Reception Committee. In his address he advocated "activism, as opposed to the passivism which was being preached from the Sabarmiti Ashram of Mahatma and Pondicherry Ashram of Sri Aurbindo Ghosh" He also pleaded for the modernisation of the material side of life.

The last but not the least event of outstanding importance in 1928 was the annual session of the Indian National Congress at Calcutta. The breach between the two wings of the Congress appeared to be imminent. Pandit Motilal group stood for the all-in-all acceptance of the recommendations of the Nehru report while the young element which had assumed an unquestioned power during the year stood for Complete Independence. Mahatmaji, however, came forward with a compromise resolution which stated that "subject to the exigencies of the political situation, the Congress will adopt the Nehru Constitution in its entirety, if it is accepted by the British Parliament on or before December 31, 1929; but in the event of its non-acceptance by that date, or its earlier rejection, the Congress will organise

non-violent non-co-operation by advising the country to refuse *taxation and in such other manner as may* be decided upon."

But in the words of Mr. Bose himself "the maximum concession which they could make, fell short of the minimum demand of the left wingers." So he brought forward an amendment and in a fighting speech declared that the Congress would be content with nothing short of Complete Independence Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru also made a brilliant speech in support of the amendment which on the merits of its object evoked universal support.

It was quite imminent that Gandhiji's resolution would be rejected by a heavy majority thus resulting in a thumping victory for the leftists The supporter of the actual resolution therefore gave out that if the Mahatma was defeated, he would retire from the Congress. Such a menace was enough to turn the fate of national decisions in a country where mass psychology could easily be exploited in the halo of saintliness. So the Amendment was lost by 973 to 1,350 votes.

The Lahore Congress of 1929 was approaching fast and the year of grace allowed to the British Parliament in 1928 was to terminate on the occasion of this session. Mahatmaji was fully conscious of the formidable strength that the left wing had exhibited during the Calcutta Congress. A diplomat president with strong hand and incalculable influence was

therefore required for this session to tackle the opposition and to conduct the struggle which lay ahead.

Gandhiji's name was proposed for the presidentship but he declined to accept the responsibility. Next probability was Sirdar Patel, the hero of Bardoli campaigns who had displayed outstanding courage and enthusiasm during the peasantry awakening in Gujrat but Gandhiji did not seem to agree to the proposal because he was shrewd enough to forecast the strength of the opposition. An unprecedented awakening among the youth during the year was before his very eyes. Successive Youth Conferences at Poona, Ahmedabad and Nagpur presided over by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Kamla Devi Chattopadhyaya and Subhas Chandra Bose respectively and last but by no means the least, the Students' Conference held at Lahore, the citadel of the coming session, under the presidentship of Subhas Chandra Bose were more than enough to indicate the powerful consolidation of the leftist element that was expected to result at Lahore Mahatmaji, therefore, played a most diplomatic tact in the matter of presidential election for the session. In the words of Mr. Bose "for the Mahatma it was essential that he should win over Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru if he wanted to beat down the left wing opposition and regain his former undisputed supremacy over the Congress......For the Mahatma the choice was a prudent one, but for the Congress

left wing it proved to be unfortunate, because that event marked the beginning of a political *rapprochement* between the Mahatma and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and a consequent alienation between the latter and the Congress left wing......and his election as President opened a new chapter in his public career. Since then Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has been a consistent and unfailing supporter of Mahatma."

The session was approaching fast. The president had been designated but it seemed that the British Government took no notice of the compromise resolution. The country was eagerly looking forward to the 31st of December 1929, when the banner of Complete Independence was to be unfurled. Two months earlier, *i.e.*, on October 31, 1929, Lord Irwin issued a statement saying that " he had been authorised by His Majesty's Government to state clearly that in their judgment it is implicit in their declaration of 1917 that the actual issue of India's constitutional progress, as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion Status." He further made an announcement that a Round Table Conference would be held in London as soon as the report of the Simon Commission was published.

At the appearance of this announcement the All-Parties Conference of Leaders met again at Delhi and decided by an overwhelming majority to issue a manifesto appreciating the sincerity underlying the Viceroy's pronouncement and making an offer of co-

operation to His Majesty's Government to evolve a Dominion constitution for India. Prominent among those who signed the manifesto were Gandhiji, the three Pandits—Motilal, Jawaharlal and Malaviya, Dr. Ansari, Dr. Moonje, Sirdar Patel, Rt. Hon. Shastri, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Mrs. Besant and Mrs. Naidu.

Subhas Bose was not at all in favour of the manifesto. He wanted the Congress to go ahead. He, therefore, refused to sign the manifesto and issued a separate one opposing the acceptance of the Dominion Status and condemning the idea of participating in the Round Table Conference. Other leaders who signed the opposing manifesto were Dr. Saif-ud-Din Kitchlew of Amritsar and Prof. Abdul Bari of Patna.

Soon after the leaders' manifesto was signed, at the persuasion of Shriyut V. J. Patel, the distinguished parliamentarian who was at that time the President of the Central Legislative Assembly, Pandit Motilal Nehru and Gandhiji had an interview with the Viceroy but both came back empty handed to the Lahore Congress. Mahatma Gandhi brought forward the resolution of Complete Independence which also contained a clause congratulating His Excellency Lord Irwin on his providential escape when his train was bombed. There was a considerable excitement over this clause because the hot-blooded young men led by Subhas Bose were opposed to its inclusion but in spite of the opposition the actual resolution was passed by a considerable majority.

The Lahore Congress is important for more than one reason. The differences between Subhas Chandra Bose and Pandit Motilal Nehru on the question of Nehru Report and Communal Award were widened. The Pandit was regarded as the elderly esteemed leader and moreover Gandhiji's active support was always reserved for him as a result of which the Bose group generally had to meet with disappointment.

Now that they had won over to their side the most outstanding leftist leader, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, by electing him as the President, Gandhiji's supremacy in the Congress was secured beyond doubt. Whatever force of the left wingers that was yet there received another fatal blow at the hands of the President of the Lahore Congress who a year before constituted the pride of the left wing. Mr. Srinivas Iyenger, the outstanding figure of Madras who had resigned the princely post of the Advocate-General and joined the Congress and who also remained the President of the Indian National Congress in 1926 along with Subhas Chandra Bose, who since his release from Mandalay in 1927 had been a member of the Working Committee, was excluded this year from Pandit Nehru's cabinet.

At Lahore the Congress accepted what it had rejected at Calcutta and Complete Independence became the goal of the Congress. Subhas Bose moved an amendment to the main resolution urging complete boycott and establishment of a parallel government on Sien

Fein model in India. He further urged that the Congress should take in hand the task of organising the workers, peasants and youth in the country. The Congress rejected his amendment at which he made a forceful speech in which he warned the Congress in these words :—" The country will have another twelve months to consider my amendment on its merits. I have no shadow of doubt that my proposition or something very much like it will be adopted by the next Congress. My only regret however is that meanwhile much valuable time will be lost. But this cannot be helped, for political education is sometimes a slow process particularly when the influence of practically all prominent leaders is on the opposite side."

Although this amendment was rejected, yet clearly the personality of Subhas towered over all others at Lahore session. A contributor to the *Tribune* beautifully summing up the role of Subhas Bose at Lahore wrote, " Mr. Bose was an embodiment of C. R. Dass's spirit fighting against everything that smacked of oppression and for everything that led to the national glory." He addressed several meetings of young men and students, peasants and workers at Lahore and was enthusiastically received everywhere. He loved the youth of country and they loved him. He declared in a speech at a public meeting : " I believe in encouraging and serving the young men. If they have any virtues, we must encourage their virtues. I do not believe in surrendering our judgment to older politi-

cians." He was opposed to the Round Table Conference and said that no useful purpose could be served by such conferences. "Even if Dominion Status is offered to-morrow," said Bose, "our duty will be to organise the younger section into a republican party as was the case in Ireland and to keep up the agitation for Independence."

(5)

Another important feature of the Lahore session was the dispute concerning the Bengal Provincial Congress Party. The dispute had been raised by the party of Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta, who were not satisfied with B. P. C. C. as it was then constituted. The elections had gone overwhelmingly in favour of Shriyut Subhas Bose; and he had been elected President of the B. P. C. C. But it would be over-simplifying the matter if we should discuss the Bengal dispute as a mere election dispute. There were deeper issues at stake and we must narrate briefly the cause of this dispute. Both Subhas Bose and J. M. Sen Gupta were the two brilliant lieutenants of late C. R. Dass. Both of them played great part in Bengal politics even during C. R. Dass's life-time. But Subhas Bose, an extremist, frequently got into trouble with Government and was imprisoned. J. M. Sen Gupta became prominent in his absence and became the leader of the Swaraj Party, of Congress Council Party and the Mayor of Calcutta, no less than five times. But when Subhas

Bose was released from Mandalay the tables were turned. Public opinion in Bengal was swinging towards Subhas Bose. This was not only a matter of concern to his rivals, but also to the old guard of Congress, against whom Bose had raised the banner of revolt. They did not want him to be in power in Bengal. They encouraged Sen Gupta in every possible way. The dispute in Lahore session was the climax of it all. Here again we find the Congress High Command treating Subhas Bose in a step-motherly fashion. The name of Dr. Pattabhi Sitharamya was mentioned as an arbitrator. But Subhas Bose would not hear of it. He was opposed to petty squabbles, and wanted to see peace established in Bengal, but he did not want to play in the hands of the old guard. He said, "On our side there is no bitterness. We are still prepared to leave the matter to Pt. Motilal, whatever the decision be and are prepared to abide by it. If Pt. Motilal thinks that the Bengal dispute can be settled only by my resigning from it then we have no objection." Could there be a greater gesture of peace than that ? The voice of reason prevailed with Sen Gupta party and a compromise was arrived at.

At the Lahore session Subhas Bose had moved another resolution also to the effect that the members of the Working Committee should henceforth be elected from the A.I.C.C. and not nominated by the President.

The motion received severe opposition from Pandit Motilal group and was therefore lost.

The mover along with his supporters regarded this behaviour of the right wingers as most undemocratic and staged a walk-out from the session and within less than ten minutes it was announced that a new group had been formed within the Congress known as the Congress Democratic Party. Mr. Bose gave the split a similar importance as was given to the Gaya split in 1922 and sent a telegram to Mrs. C. R. Dass in Calcutta that "circumstances and tyranny of majority forced us to form separate party, as at Gaya named Congress Democratic Party. Pray spirit of Deshbandhu may guide us and your blessings may inspire us." Mr. Srinivas Iyenger, who had been the President of the Congress for some time, at this decision actually severed his relations with the High Command and this ex-President never came back in its fold again in his lifetime.

(6)

Some months later the Civil Disobedience was started. Bengal made a fitting response to the call of nation. Each province offered valuable sacrifices. But there were few incidents more disgraceful than the one which occurred in Alipur Jail on April 21, 1930. Subhas Bose who was convicted for nine months under section 124-A and was confined to this jail along with J.M. Sen Gupta, the Mayor of Calcutta Corporation, Mr. S. R. Bakshi, editor of the *Liberty*, and

Mr. Kiran Shankar Roy, Secretary, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee.

On the morning of April 21, when the Machuabazar Bomb Case prisoners were being taken to the court for trial, some of them who had some complaint against the Government officials, refused to enter the prison van. An alarm was sounded and the Pathan convicts, officials and warders came on the scene. Messrs. Subhas Bose, J. M. Sen Gupta and others also arrived there.

The Superintendent of the jail ordered forcible removal of the prisoners in van and asked Subhas Bose and others to go away. But when they protested against the use of force by the Pathan warders and refused to go, the Superintendent ordered their forcible dispersal. The Pathans rushed at Mr. Bose and his companions. Subhas Bose was thrown down with a lathi attack as a result of which he remained unconscious for more than one hour. Several others were injured and the warders forcibly removed them to their cells. The incident sent a wave of horror and indignation all over the country. The Government issued a *communique* in order to whitewash the affair. But it had no effect. Dr. B. C. Roy called it a scrap of paper. Eminent leaders of Bengal including those with pro-Government leanings denounced this disgraceful action. The Superintendent of jail found his position extremely untenable after this country-wide protest against the incident, and he got himself transferred

from the place.

This time while Subhas Bose was in prison the people of Bengal elected him as their Mayor. The province desired to confer on him the greatest distinction as a sign of their respect for his selfless services in the cause of India's freedom. In the same year, after his release, he was also elected President of the All-India Trades Union Congress, the only country-wide labour organisation in India. During the period of his office here, Mr. Bose brought the organisation much closer to the Indian National Congress.

Soon after his release in September 1930, he was again arrested in January 1931, and was sentenced to a short term in Maldah district.

Since the declaration of Complete Independence as the goal of the Congress at the Lahore session, January 26 is celebrated every year as Independence Day. Public meetings are held throughout the length and breadth of the country where the Independence Pledge as formulated by the Working Committee is repeated and processions are taken out to signify the express desire of the Indian masses for complete independence.

Bengal, from the very start of national movements in India, had always been first in the celebrations of national functions. This year Mr. Bose, who was then the Mayor of the Corporation, led the Independence Day procession at Calcutta. The procession was

declared unlawful by the police. It was, therefore, dispersed with a lathi charge by the mounted police causing serious injuries to the leader of the procession along with many others. Later, he was arrested and convicted for a period of six months along with eleven other comrades, but was released immediately afterwards before serving the actual term of imprisonment when the Gandhi-Irwin Pact came into force.

When the first Round Table Conference failed utterly in its object in the absence of any representation of the greatest political organisation in India and the Government failed badly in its efforts to suppress the Civil Disobedience Movement, the Viceroy initiated a peace move. The liberal leaders, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. M. R. Jayakar, acted as the messengers of peace. All the leaders of the Congress at that time were in different jails of the country. The Government which was anxious now to have a compromise collected several prominent members of the Working Committee at Yervada Jail, where Gandhiji was confined, and later released them unconditionally to give them a chance to consider about the terms of settlement. At last a settlement was reached which was later on known as the historic Gandhi-Irwin Pact. According to its terms Mahatma Gandhi agreed to suspend the Civil Disobedience Movement for some time and to participate in the second Round Table Conference as a representative of the Congress while the Government released all the political prisoners in

the country except those who committed any act of violence.

From the very start of negotiations young blood in the country made it clear to Mahatma Gandhi specially and other leaders generally that any compromise without the unconditional release of Sardar Bhagat Singh, the well-known convict of the Punjab Conspiracy Case and the Assembly Bomb Case, would not be acceptable to the people of India. Mahatmaji gave the strongest possible assurance to the young leaders of Naujwan Bharat Sabha that he would earnestly try for that but despite his efforts he could not effect the release of Sardar Bhagat Singh. Gandhiji had prolonged talks with the Viceroy on the matter but the Viceroy was reluctant to commit himself to any promise whatsoever. He told Gandhiji that it was a matter concerning the Punjab Government and that he was, therefore, unable to help in the matter. Gandhiji knew that the Viceroy had the right to directly commute the sentences but he hesitated to break the negotiations on this issue, and signed the pact ignoring persistent demand of the young men in the country.

The youth of the country were greatly agitated over the terms of the pact and the Naujwan Bharat Sabha decided to hold an All-India Naujwan Conference on the occasion of Karachi Congress to lodge a protest against the policy of Mahatma Gandhi and express their condemnation of the Gandhi-Irwin

Pact. Mr. Bose, who was known to be always opposed to any compromise with the British Imperialism, was unanimously elected president of this Conference. On 23rd of March, exactly at the time when the Congress was to meet at Karachi, the three youths, Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Raj Guru were executed. The news enraged the entire country. A band of agitated youngmen demonstrated with black flags when Gandhiji came to Karachi and even threw brickbats. A black flower was also presented to Gandhiji as a token of mourning over the terms of his pact with the Viceroy.

Side by side with the Congress Session the Naujwan Conference was also held at Karachi under the presidentship of Subhas Chandra Bose. He also presided over the All-India Political Sufferers' Conference held in the same *pandal.*

In his presidential address he very severely criticised the policy of Mahatma Gandhi and declared that it was quite an unwise step to suspend the civil disobedience at such a time when the masses were fully prepared for the struggle and that the pact was nothing short of a betrayal of the masses.

In 1932 when after the second Round Table Conference Mahatma Gandhi returned disappointed to his country, he called the meeting of the Working Committee at Bombay. Subhas Babu, who had been deprived of his seat in the Congress Cabinet at Lahore, was specially invited for certain clarification and ex-

change of ideas with the Congress High Command but was arrested there under Regulation III of 1818. Consumptive as he was, at this time also he immediately received a severe attack of fever in the jail. The authorities released him in 1933 to enable him to proceed to Europe for medical treatment but did not allow him to see his parents in India.

CHAPTER IV
THE EXILE

Early in 1933, Subhas Bose was released from detention due to his serious illness and allowed to proceed to Europe to regain his health. But though the Government had set him free, they had no intention of allowing him full freedom outside India. Sir Samuel Hoare in answer to a question in the Commons said that Mr. Bose was not allowed unrestricted freedom and that he could not visit Germany.

Subhas Bose went to Vienna first and remained there for some time. Austria was at that time nominally a republic with Dr. Dolfuss as Chancellor, but in fact it was ruled by the Austrian Fascists, the Heimwehr, whose leaders Prince Starhmberg and Major Fey dominated Austrian politics. The city of Vienna was being ruled by the Social Democrats. They had, in course of twelve years of their uninterrupted rule in Vienna, made the city one of the most beautiful in the world. Their socialist experiments interested Subhas Bose. He met the Mayor of Vienna, Karl Sietz, who

showed him the achievements of socialist municipal regime. They compared the state of affairs in Calcutta with Vienna for Subhas Bose had been the Mayor of Calcutta and knew about the municipal conditions in India. Subhas Bose was quite enthusiastic about the socialist experiments and he wanted to introduce the same in Calcutta Corporation But though he believed in socialist planning, he did not pose as a partisan of socialists in Austria He admired what was good in their schemes.

He went to see the parade of Heimwehr troops at Schonbrunn in Vienna The parade was held on the occasion of celebration of the Day of 'Victory' against the Turks It impressed him because he liked disciplined organisations Both these events had great effect on Subhas Bose. But his time in Vienna was not occupied in visiting Socialist or Fascist organisations only. He wanted to do something for India also. He possessed immense love for his country. Wherever, therefore, he went he kept the service of India as his primary motive and worked incessantly for her welfare.

At this time Mr. V. J Patel, the well-known President of the Central Assembly, was also there undergoing treatment in Vienna. Subhas Bose met him there and was able to win the respect and esteem of the great Indian parliamentarian. Both the leaders lived together and Subhas Bose, whose condition was better than that of Patel, devoted himself to his service and was till his death his constant companion. Both

found that they had many things in common. Both were relentless enemies of reactionary element in Congress. They wanted to put the case of India before the foreign countries and also to purge Congress of such compromising ideas. They, therefore, collaborated with each other in their work for India. President Patel was very keen about it and before his death he left one lakh of rupees for purpose of foreign propaganda under the control of Subhas Bose.

In May, 1933, when they heard that Mahatma Gandhi had suspended the Civil Disobedience Movement for six weeks and started negotiations for a compromise with the Government they issued a joint manifesto from Vienna that "the latest action of Mr. Gandhi in suspending the civil disobedience is a confession of failure." They further stated that "we are clearly of the opinion that Mr. Gandhi as a political leader has failed. The time has, therefore, come for the radical reorganisation of the Congress on a new principle with a new method, for which a new leader is essential, as it is unfair to expect Mr. Gandhi to work the programme not consistent with his life-long principle." "If the Congress as a whole," the statement proceeded, "can undergo this transformation it will be the best course. Failing this, a new party will have to be formed within the Congress, composed of radical elements."

The idea of foreign propaganda, later on so much stressed by Jawaharlal Nehru, first originated with

these Vienna invalids. In spite of their weak health, they carried on immense activities. Subhas Bose was asked to visit England by the Indian residents there, who wanted him to preside over the All-Parties London Conference of Indians. But the British Government did not permit him to go to England The India Office refused to grant him passport. He, however, sent his written address which was read by Dr. Bhatt in his absence. In his remarkable address he appealed to the Indian residents there to view the situation in India in light of the changes taking place all over the world and to do propaganda in favour of India. Criticising the policy of Mahatma Gandhi he said :

"If the Delhi Pact of 1931 was a blunder, the surrender of 1933 was a calamity of the first magnitude By suspending the Civil Disobedience Movement at a critical hour work was suffering and the sacrifices of a nation for the last thirteen years are virtually undone."

At this conference he, for the first time, placed the proposal of "Samavadya Sangh" and a committee of 22 members was formed to thrash out the aims and objects of the party.

When Subhas Bose first announced his ideas about "Samavadya Sangh," Fascism and Communism had divided the European people in opposite sides "Samavadya Sangh" came in for criticism not at the hands of the Leftists in Britain, who always came to the rescue of Mr. Bose whenever he got

in trouble, but at the hands of the Conservative press.

Replying to his critics Mr. Bose issued a statement from Geneva in which he defended himself. He said :

" In view of certain statements made in the British press and reproduced thereafter in the Indian press, which may have led to some misunderstanding of my socio-political views, I desire to say that there has been no fundamental changes in my position. Since I came to Europe I maintain more strongly than ever that while it is imperatively necessary that we should study all the modern movements abroad, it is equally necessary for us in India to chalk out the future lines of our progress in conformity with our past history and our present and future requirements. The geographical and intellectual isolation which India has enjoyed for centuries, should enable us to adopt a sympathetic but critical attitude towards others lands and nations. It is necessary for us in India to distinguish clearly once for all between our internal and external policy..............In determining our internal policy it would be a fatal error to say that the choice for India lies between Communism and Fascism No standpoint or theory in socio-political affairs can be the last word in human wisdom. The socio-political theories and institutions of modern nations are the product of their history, environment and needs. They are liable to change or

develop just as human life is. Moreover it should be remembered that some of the most interesting institutions of the present day are still under experiments. Time must elapse before they could be declared to be successful and in the meantime we should not mortgage our intellect anywhere. My own view has always been that India's task is to work out syntheses of all that is useful and good in the different movements that we see to-day. For this purpose we should have to study with critical sympathy all the movements and experiments that are going on in Europe and America and we would be guilty of folly if we ignore any movement or experiment because of any preconceived bias or predilection."

British politicians were just then posing before the world as the main spokesmen about Indian affairs. At the World Economic Conference there was nobody to represent India. Before the Economic Conference in London a Conference of International Chamber of Commerce was also held in Vienna. India was represented at that conference but not in London. Subhas Bose issued a statement declaring that decisions concerning India were being taken without consulting the Indian representatives. "The Vienna Conference," he said, "had opposed the idea of Tariff-Truce, but these ideas will not be heard at the London Economic Conference."

(2)

If doors to England were barred, there were coun-

tries in South Eastern Europe and Western Europe, to which Subhas Bose was permitted to go. He went to Prague by air in July, 1933, and stayed there for ten days He was given a very enthusiastic reception in that "middle-class republic of Europe." The Lord Mayor of Prague himself received him. He was provided all the facilities to see the work done by Prague Municipality. He visited Masaryk Homes for the lepers and invalids, and went to see Prague University, Skoda Factories at Pilson and several other places. He met Foreign Minister Dr. Benes. When he returned to Vienna, the condition of Patel had deteriorated and they both went to Nyon but Patel soon succumbed to his illness. His body was sent to India and Subhas Bose accompanied it up to Marseilles. His death was a great loss not only to the nation but also a setback to the principles for which he stood. He had set upon his mind for doing propaganda in foreign countries in favour of India and along with Subhas had prepared great scheme about it but he died soon and Subhas Bose was left alone to carry on the work on behalf of India in Europe.

On his return he stayed at Geneva, and later on went to France for some time. In Italy an Asiatic Students Conference had been called and Subhas Bose participated in it He stayed for some days in Rome and for the first time observed closely the youth movements and discipline among those people.

The visit to Germany which had been originally

disallowed by the Government was later on permitted. But the state of health of Subhas Bose had for a long time prevented him from going there.

The small countries of Balkans, which Subhas Bose visited in April. 1934, were very much sympathetic to India. In Sofia, Budapest, Bucharest, everywhere the people anxiously heard what he had to say about India. In Belgrade some trouble was experienced by Subhas Bose. The leading newspaper of Belgrade *Politika* sent a representative to interview him on his arrival in the Yugo-Slav capital. The representative told him that some time ago they had published an article favouring British rule in India and written by the Nawab of Rampur, who passed from Belgrade. But they wanted to have an Indian nationalist's view of British rule. Subhas agreed about it, but in the evening, the editor telephoned him saying that the Foreign Office had forbidden the article. It transpired that the British Consul had intervened and stopped publication of the article To make matters worse, the Reuters had given out that Subhas Bose had not been received well in Belgrade, that he had in a statement criticised the Belgrade officials and his statement had not been published. This was a glaring travesty of facts. Mr. Bose soon issued a statement clearing up the whole matter and then the world learned the truth.

This intervention of British Consul was not an isolated incident. He had been harassed by the police

too. In an article to *Reconciliation*, a monthly organ of the Christian Pacifist Congregational Crusade, Subhas Bose complained about police treatment.

Some time after that Subhas Bose received a message that his father had become seriously ill. He decided to fly to India. When he landed he was served with an order under Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act. The order put restrictions on his movements, and ran as follows :—

1. To proceed at once to 38/2, Elgin Road and reside there till further orders.

2. Not to be absent from the precincts of the said house and not to interview any visitor at any time.

3. Not to correspond, converse or communicate or associate in any manner with anybody, save the members of your family actually living at 38/2, Elgin Road.

4. To deliver unopened to the Deputy Superintendent of Police, Special Branch, Calcutta, or the officer specially deputed by him for the purpose all books or communications (whether such communications be in the nature of telegrams, letters, postal packages or otherwise) received by you from any source whatever or intended for to whomsoever address and whether the same be received by you or by some agent or servant on your behalf.

5. When so required by the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Special Branch, or by any Magistrate,

to facilitate in every way access of such person for any lawful purposes to the premises in which you be living.

6. If you knowingly disobey any of the directions you will be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to seven years and also liable to fine.

Subhas Bose's father died on the day he landed. He was able to join in the last rites of his father. He wanted to stay for some time in his country, but the Government served him with an order to return to Europe within one week. Subhas Bose wrote a letter to Government asking for permission to stay for one month. "Incarceration in my country is better than freedom abroad," he wrote, but he was not permitted to stay for one month, according to his desire. Moreover his health had considerably deteriorated and his physicians wanted him to come back to Vienna. While in Calcutta he was X-rayed. On January 10, 1934, he sailed from India. Before going he gave an interview to the press in the course of which he said that he was not competent to express any opinion on affairs in India, as he was not in a position to see things for himself. "But," he declared, "we are passing through a political slump and the problem for us is to keep up the enthusiasm of the people."

(3)

It would be observed from the foregoing pages

that the first visit of Subhas Bose brought about a great orientation in outlook of his life. But it was a very hectic life that he led in his first visit. His own health was in a very poor state, while the work he had taken on himself to do was immense. President Patel's health, interference of representatives of British Government abroad in his activities, all these things worried him much. Besides, so great had been the field of his activity and so vast the panorama of shifting scenes that Bose was left with very little time for cool reflection. Yet he was able to write a remarkable book in course of his first visit. "Indian Struggle 1920—1934" in which the author endeavoured to present a fine picture of the Indian Freedom Movement *from the point of view of an extremist and the third degree methods adopted by* the British bureaucracy to suppress it on the one hand and to narrate the impressions he had imbibed in Europe on the other. The book was published in England, but was soon banned entry into India by Sir Samuel Hoare who declared that it encouraged terrorism.

The real transformation in his views came in course of the second visit. He first landed at Naples, then went to Rome and spent about a week there. Rome had great fascination for him because he said: "It is a blend of the old and the new." He had devoted his early visit to studying municipal administration and sight-seeing, but his second visit was that of a keen political observer.

In Rome he met the ex-King Amanullah of Afghanistan. The Afghan king was very much interested in Indian affairs and enquired from Subhas Bose about the Indian National Congress, etc. The tragic figure of this simple patriotic monarch impressed Subhas Bose.

From Rome Subhas Bose went to Vienna and remained there under treatment of Viennese specialist Dr. Neumann. He then went to Geneva to unveil Patel statue and from Geneva to Paris to consult a specialist in tropical diseases. When his condition had somewhat improved he attended to affairs about India. He was constantly kept informed about situation in his country. The Bengal situation was bad. It pained him to see Congressmen wrangling over minor issues. He wrote to his followers in the Bengal Congress Committe to make compromise with Sen Gupta group on fifty-fifty basis.

One thing to which Subhas Bose devoted his greatest attention during the period of his exile was to defend his country against obnoxious propaganda of the foreigners who had up till now painted lurid pictures of India. Most people in Europe had been made to believe that India was a land where untouchability was the main problem and not hunger and foreign rule. In one of his articles Mr. Bose has drawn a painful picture of how India was misrepresented in Europe. He writes, " While we are quite indifferent to this question, missionaries and

other 'civilizing agencies' are not inactive. For several decades they have painted India as a land where widows are burnt, girls are married at the age of five or six and people are virtually unacquainted with the art of dressing. I remember vividly that when I was in England in 1920, I was one day passing a lecture hall in front of which there was a pictorial advertisement of a lecture to be delivered by a missionary about India. In that advertisement, there were pictures of some half-naked men and women of the blackest complexion, possessing the ugliest features. Ostensibly the lecturer wanted to raise funds for his 'civilizing' work in India and was, therefore, painting India in this light without the slightest compunction. Towards the end of 1933, a German journalist who claimed to have visited India recently, wrote in a Munich paper that she had seen widows being burnt in India and dead bodies lying uncared for in the streets of Bombay. Recently in a Vienna pictorial paper (*Wiener Bilder*, dated the 30th June) a picture of a dead body covered with insects was printed and there was a footnote saying that it was the corpse of a *sadhu* which could not be removed for serveral days because of the Hindu belief that the dead body of a *sadhu* should not be removed by ordinary men. What surprises me is the careful selection of pictures about India made by propagandists in Europe with a view to depicting India in the worst colours possible. This is as much true of pictorial magazines as of films.

Regarding the anti-Indian propaganda conducted by films like 'India Speaks' and 'Bengali', there has been some exposure in India already and I need not dilate on it. But I am afraid there has not been sufficient exposure of the mischief which is being done by the film 'Everybody Loves Music,' in which Mahatma Gandhi appears in his own dress dancing with a European girl."

The film "Bengali" depicted a very rosy view of British rule in India. The British were shown as protectors of India. Subhas Bose indignantly protested against this to Cardinal Innitzer, Archbishop of Vienna. He said that the British had no doubt conquered India but India resented their claim to call themselves protectors of India. The film was subsequently withdrawn from circulation.

When Subhas Bose was in Europe, Hitler made his notorious speech, in which he declared that the destiny of white races was to rule the black races. This statement evoked world-wide protest. Subhas Bose like most coloured people was greatly annoyed at this outburst of Hitler. He vehemently denounced this speech. The Nazis hastily declared that it did not apply to Japan or India. But this explanation could not satisfy Subhas Bose. He argued that all the newspapers of the world could not be lying when they issued this speech of Hitler.

One of the highlights of his second visit to Europe was his meeting with De Valera. He arrived in Dublin

in February, 1936, and was received by the Mayor and other State officials. He met De Valera and they talked about situation in India and Ireland. De Valera explained to him the Irish policy especially his dealings with Britain. Subhas Bose declared that India had much in common with Ireland and Indians had great sympathy with the Irish struggle for freedom. Besides Mr. De Valera, he interviewed the Minister of Agriculture and Lands, the Minister of Local Self-Government, the President of Sein Fein, Editor of the *Irish Press* and the Republican Party officials. He wanted the contact between the two oppressed nations to continue and for this purpose suggested to Mr. De Valera that some facilities should be provided for some Indian students and professors to visit Ireland, for study in its universities. De Valera agreed to consider such a proposal for he too believed that the bonds between the two countries should be strengthened.

(4)

In 1936 the annual session of the Indian National Congress was to be held at Lucknow. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the President-elect, had reached the country and it was widely desired that Mr. Bose should also be present at the session. Pandit Nehru conveyed the sentiments of his countrymen to Mr. Bose in Vienna and extended an invitation to him to come to India. But the Government of India on the other hand was not willing to allow his entry in the country.

He was told that if he returned he would be arrested. Mr. J. W. Taylor, His Majesty's Consul in Vienna, served him with the following notices :

"I have to-day received instructions from the Secretary of State for Foregin Affairs to communicate to you a warning that the Government of India have seen in the press statements that you propose to return to India this month and the Government of India desire to make it clear to you that you should do so, you cannot expect to remain at liberty."

In the presence of this notice the only course left open for Mr. Bose was either to submit before the warning or to accede to the desire of his countrymen and march towards home. To expect from him to submit before iniquity and injustice is to expect something impossible and impracticable. So he adopted the latter course and in respect to the wishes of his countrymen he left for India on an Italian steamer s. s. *Conterverde.*

He felt that even imprisonment in one's own land was better than exile. Before starting, on March 17, he addressed a long letter to the *Manchester Guardian* in which he highly protested against this order. In the course of his letter he said :

" I now want to go home and I am served with this official threat. My last imprisonment was bad enough, legally and ethically. But the proposed imprisonment,

in the event of my returning to India now. beats all records. May I ask if this is how British law is going to be administered in India and if this is a foretaste of the expanded liberty which the new Constitution will usher in ?"

The steamer touched the Indian shores on April 11, 1936. Thousands of men and women had collected there to receive the great Indian patriot but to their greatest disappointment as soon as Mr. Bose disembarked he was arrested under Section 3 of Regulation III of 18.8, and sent to Yervada jail. He left an inspiring, message for his country before leaving. He said :

" Keep the flag of freedom flying."

This arrest, according to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, " was one of the latest and most significant instances of wide-spread intensive suppression of civil liberties in India." Not only this that the whole country raised a loud hue and cry against this arrest but questions were raised in England also. In India Mr. Bhulabhai Desai, Leader of the Opposition in the Central Assembly, tabled an adjournment motion, the Congress Working Committe passed a resolution and the Congress Socialist Party issued a statement strongly condemning the action of the Government. In England Mr. Maxton and Mr. Campbell Stephen waited upon Mr. Butler in the form of a deputation urging his immediate release and also raised questions in the House of Commons demanding reason for his indefinite confinement without any trial.

The Government was greatly unnerved. The Under-Secretary of State said in the House of Commons in reply to a question that Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose was closely associated with one of the main terrorist parties in India.

The pressure of public opinion in India and in England this time at his arrest was so great that the Government found itself compelled to give serious consideration to the question Moreover, the authorities in India desired the co-operation of the Congress in introducing the Provincial Autonomy, the first part of Government of India Act, and therefore they released Subhas Chandra Bose in March, 1937.

For some time after his release he remained at Calcutta but on 1st May, 1937, according to the medical advice, he proceeded to Dalhousie under the personal care of Dr. Dharamvir. During his stay there, his health made some improvement but with the advent of winter he came back to Calcutta wherefrom he proceeded to Europe to fully recover his health.

Formerly his visits to Europe for medical treatment were in the capacity of a prisoner while this time it was more or less a pleasure trip. A grand reception was accorded to him in London and in his first speech there he declared that the Congress would oppose Frederation tooth and nail as envisaged in the second

part of the Government of India Act. During his short stay in Europe this time he delivered nearly half a dozen speeches and everywhere he declared openly that the country would not accept this part of the Government of India Act and if ever any attempt was made to forcibly impose it on an unwilling India the Congress would resist it with all the force.

CHAPTER V.

THE PRESIDENT

This was the time when the 51st session of the Congress was to be held at Haripura Four names were proposed for the presidentship, *viz.*, Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. All of them were men of high calibre and patriotism All of them had given their all in the cause of the country but everybody realised that Mr. Bose's claim was more appropriate and justified after a wearied and hectic career. Even the prospective candidates were convinced of it and therefore they withdrew their names in his favour in appreciation of his selfless sacrifices towards the cause of India's independence, and thus elected him unopposed as the President of the Indian National Congress for the year 1938. Although his poor health did not permit him to shoulder so heavy a responsibility yet he bowed before the country's decision and on the 14th January, 1938, flew back to his country by air. A grand reception was given to the President-designate at the Karachi aerodrome. The whole country welcomed him. Mahatmaji blessed him and the friends congratulated him for this great distinction.

The site for the Congress was selected at Haripura on the banks of the river Tapti.

As a token of respect to the memory of late Shriyut Vithalbhai Patel, the late President of the Central Assembly, the Congress *Pandal* was named after him as Vithal Nagar. The Reception Committee in order to signify the 51st session had prepared 51 gates for the *pandal*, 51 national flags were hoisted, a chariot driven by 51 bullocks was arranged for the presidential procession and 51 national songs were sung. The Congress Nagar presented a very beautiful view. White-clad Congressmen driven from all parts of the country were seen busy in political discussions. Besides a large number of delegates and visitors, ministers from all the Congress provinces had also come to Haripura.

The tricoloured flag unfurled at the Mahatma's cottage was extending a message of hope and freedom to the people of India. There was always a large gathering of people assembled outside the President's hut and the residence of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to have *darshan* of their young leaders The meeting of the Working Committee was to take place on the 14th of February. The President-elect had reached on the 13th. He was taken out in a very grand procession, rarely witnessed in the history of the Congress. The A.I.C.C. met on the 16th, when Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the former President, reviewed the situation of the last year and requested the new President to

take the chair. Amidst loud shouts of ***Bande Matram*** and defeaning cheers he occupied the Presidential chair.

There was a very busy programme before the committee this time. In India Mr. Govind Ballabh Pant and Mr. Sri Krishna Sinha, the Premiers of the U. P. and Bihar, had placed the resignations of their Cabinets in the hands of their Governors on the question of release of political prisoners. On the other hand, the clouds of war were hanging over the horizon of Europe. These were the two most important problems facing the Congress. The left wing leaders were bringing full pressure on the Congress High Command and the Parliamentary Sub-Committee to create deadlock in all the seven provinces over the question of Bihar and U. P. The question of the European War was also attracting the serious attention of the Congress leaders.

The open session of the Congress was to meet on the 19th February. That morning Vithal Nagar woke up to the sound of bugles and kettledrums. The martial tunes reminded everybody of the flag-hoisting function at Jhanda Chowk. Unending streams of people arrived at the place singing national songs. Amidst a most inspiring setting Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose hoisted the National Flag.

In the open session Durbar Gopal Dass, the President of the Reception Committee, welcomed the President, delegates and visitors to the Congress Session.

He made a brief but marvellously impressive speech expressing his faith in the leadership of the Congress President and the programme of 1921. "It is not for me to make a speech," he said, "political or other; the political pronouncement will be made by the President; my business is to welcome you to-day on behalf of Gujarat." He added, "We are blessed with the Presidentship of one whose life is one of unbroken records of sacrifices and service and suffering... I hope and pray that under the wise guidance of our President we may march further forward to our goal and add more glorious chapters to our history."

After this Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose read out his Presidential Address which was a product of great political far-sightedness and knowledge of the situation. He spoke with simplicity and sincerity of a man of faith. His utterances were intensely realistic and international in outlook. Each word of the address received appreciation from all sections of the press.

To give a detailed description and exhaustive account of the Congress Session is not the object of the book. Suffice it to say that after passing some most important resolutions amid hopes and confidence the session concluded after usual sittings.

Despite his weak state of health Subhas Babu, during the whole period of his office, did not take a day's rest but worked incessantly to spread the Congress ideal. He made several extensive tours of the

country and delivered numerous speeches, the burden of which was severe opposition of the Federal Scheme.

(2)

The drama of Tripuri is perhaps the most exciting ever seen in the history of the Congress. It is not only an unprecedented event but also painful and tragic to the highest degree. Numerous instances could be pointed out when there occurred sharp differences in the Congress ranks and when the leaders of divergent opinions exerted their best efforts to come into power but the present breach had no parallel in the history of Indian politics in that it for the first time presented a full-fledged trial of strength between the left and the right and brought to light some astounding revelations which could otherwise have remained in close secrecy and darkness.

The Congress High Command constituted as it is to-day, in spite of its unique achievements and valuable sacrifices, had never parted from the spirit of moderation. Undoubtedly the Congress fought many a successful battle under the lead of Gandhiji and his friends yet nobody will deny that their battles ended always in some compromise.

But now there was a leader at its helm who was bitterly uncompromising and extremist in nature. He was the severest foe of any compromise with the British Imperialism. He was a man with perfect clarity of outlook and strength of convictions and

this was perhaps the main background of his dispute with the other leaders of the High Command at Tripuri.

The point at dispute lay in the fact that there were sharp differences among the Congressmen from the lowest ranks to the leader of the High Command on the issue of Federation. Subhas Chandra Bose had during his one year of presidentship shown it beyond doubt that so long as he was in office the Federation was sure to be rejected in whatever amended form it might come. While there existed in the High Command an influential element which, just as in the case of provincial autonomy, was inclined towards its acceptance if it came in some amended form. Naturally this issue was expected to bring about acute differences between the President and his Cabinet if Subhas Babu became the President for the next year also The right wing leaders, therefore, expressed great anxiety over the presidential election. There were three candidates in the field, *viz.*, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya and Shri Subhas Bose The Maulana hesitated to accept the responsibility owing to reasons of health He, therefore, withdrew his name from the contest and announced his decision in the course of the following statement :

"I am delighted to find that Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya's name has also been proposed. He was about to withdraw his candidature under the impres-

sion that I would not withdraw my name ; but I am glad to say that I have prevailed upon him not to do so. He is an old member of the Congress Working Committee and an indefatigable worker. I commend his name to the delegates for election. I hope his election will be unanimous."

Such a withdrawal accompanied by such a statement was unprecedented in the traditions of the presidential elections. After Maulana's statement it became clear to the country that something must have transpired behind the curtain. In the best interests of the nation, therefore, Mr. Bose decided to take up a bold stand and declared in the press that he had no right to retire from the contest. In discussing this question, he said, "all sense of false modesty will have to be put aside for the issue is not a personal one. As in other free countries," he added, "the presidential election in India should be fought on the basis of definite problems and programmes."

In conclusion he stated, " If however, as a result of the appeal made by eminent leaders like Maulana Azad, the majority of the delegates vote against my re-election, I shall loyally abide by their verdict and shall continue to serve the Congress and the country as an ordinary soldier."

Mr. Bose was perfectly justified in putting forth his arguments in support of his decision to contest the election. In the circumstances that the unanimity of

opinions in the Congress had been divided, the only right course open for him was to remind the Congressmen that as in all similar cases in other countries, election in the Congress should also be fought on the basis of definite policies and programmes. His boldness was appreciated in every quarter and the force of his reasons appealed to a very large number of Congressmen as a result of which not only the youth of the country but majority of the delegates wanted Mr. Bose to be the President for another term. The leadership of the Congress on the other hand was in dead earnest to throw him out of the office ; but at the same time they were afraid lest the large majority of the anti-Federationists in the country should re-elect him. They, therefore, decided to exert their personal influence on the delegates and as a first measure towards that Sardar Vallabhai Patel, Babu Rajendra Prasad, Mr. Jairamdass Daulatram, Acharya Kirpalani, Mr. Shanker Rao Deo and Mr. Bhulabhai Desai, six prominent members of the Working Committee, issued a statement to the press openly supporting the candidature of Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya.

> " We believe," they stated, " that Dr. Pattabhi is quite fitted for the post of the President of the Congress. He is one of the oldest members of the Working Committee and he had a long and unbroken record of public service to his credit. We, therefore, commend his name to the Congress delegates for election."

Apart from this statement given to the press by the six prominent members of the Working Committee in support of the right wing candidate, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya himself also argued as to why he should be made the Congress President. In the course of a long statement he said :

> "If I am elected I should regard my election as an appreciation of my effort on behalf of the States. I am working as President of the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee and as a member of the Working Committee I have come across cases of indiscipline and corruption in Congress ranks. If elected, I should devote my energy also to putting our own house in order."

The unfortunate statement of six members of the Working Committee gave rise to several controversial statements on the subject. The press was the only medium for the candidates to canvass. The election was to take place on the 29th of January. Four days before the election about half a dozen statements appeared in papers. In the face of the above two statements, it was essential for Mr. Bose either to canvass his candidature more strongly or to retire from the contest. The latter course he did not consider desirable to adopt in the best interests of the country ; he therefore decided to take up a bold stand and made some most important observations

which were not only impressive in the highest degree, but for obvious reasons were unpalatable to the old guard in the Congress leadership.

He said :

> " It is widely believed that there is a prospect of a compromise on the Federal scheme between the right wing of the Congress and the British Government during the coming year Consequently the right wing do not want a leftist President who may be a thorn in the way of a compromise and may put obstacles in the path of negotiations "

Unexpected facts revealed by Mr. Bose in his latest statement were by no means less than a bombshell on Sardar Patel and his friends

In such a case, when the whole country was following the controversy with interest, it was binding upon the right wing leaders either to accept the allegations as true or clear their position before the electorate.

Sardar Vallabhai Patel thereupon issued another statement to the press on behalf of his party and tried to suppress the real facts

Nevertheless the several statements issued on one side or the other had gone a long way towards clarifying the issue. It was now abundantly clear to the delegates that the plea put forward by Sardar Patel and his five colleagues for unanimous election had neither any force nor validity. The country had quite understood that the idea that there should be

no contest was a cry of those days when the Presidentship of the Congress involved no great responsibility but was a purely ceremonious honour reserved for her promoters and well-wishers A unanimous election as a matter of fact is possible only when the opinion in the country is not divided but when it is fought on the basis of definite policies and programmes the plea for unanimous election is quite out of the question. Moreover the intention expressed by Mr. Bose in his latest statement on the subject that he would be willing to retire from the contest in case some anti-Federationist leftist candidate was accepted in his place attracted more supporters, both for him and for his cause, and the country quite realised that he was not running after the office but was contesting the election to fight for a principle "It is really to regret," he said, "that my name has been proposed as a candidate for Presidentship I had suggested to numerous friends that a new candidate from the left should be put up this year, but unfortunately that could not be done and my name was proposed from several provinces Even at this late hour," he added, "I am prepared to withdraw from the contest if a genuine anti-Federationist like Acharya Narendra Deo, for instance, be accepted as the President for the coming year. If the right wing really want national unity and solidarity they would be well advised to accept a leftist as President." Mr. Bose had gone even one step further in his next statement to avoid the contest

but it seemed that the right wing leaders were confident of their victory, so they did not care to devote their consideration to the offer.

"And as I have already stated more than once", said Mr. Bose in one of his statements, "it is still possible to avoid contest if the right wing will accept as president somebody who will command the confidence of the left. If a contest does take place, as appears inevitable at the moment of writing, the responsibility for dividing the Congress will devolve entirely on the right wing. Will they shoulder that responsibility or, even at this late hour, will they decide to stand for national unity and solidarity on the basis of a progressive programme ?"

Had the right wing leaders accepted this officer of Mr. Bose the present dissension in Congress could certainly have not taken place. The offer was not at all cared for, so the inevitable result of it came and the election took place. The total number of votes polled in all the provinces was 2,957, out of which Mr. Bose got 1,580 and Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya 1,377, and Mr. Bose was declared elected by a majority of more than 200 votes.

(3)

When the election results were conveyed to Mr. Bose he took the wisest step and in a befitting manner warned the enemies of India's freedom who were eagerly looking forward to a split in the Congress ranks.

"It is no time for jubilation," Mr. Bose declared. "On the contrary, it is time for heart-searching and for preparation for the future. Let us accept the result of the contest in a spirit of humility, and deep sense of respect. I feel overwhelmed with thoughts about to-morrow; so should everybody feel who voted on my side.

"Lest the enemies of Indian freedom should think that there has been split in the Congress, let me make it perfectly clear that the Congress stands united as ever before. Congressmen may have their differences in certain matters, but where fight against Imperialism is concerned, they are all one."

In a similar tone and in still more impressive words Mr. Bose expressed the same view at a public meeting which was held in Calcutta to felicitate him on his success in the election contest. "We should not be so foolish," he said, "as to accept the verdict of the delegation in a spirit of elation or jubilation. On the contrary, we should accept it in a spirit of humility and with a deep sense of responsibility. In this hour of victory do not utter a word or do anything which may hurt the feelings of anybody or cast reflections on any person."

Although the President refrained from making any comment himself and also advised his supporters not to enter in any jubilation yet the presidential election became the talk of the whole of political India. Some sections of the press actually regarded it as defea

of the right wing policy and total discontinuance of the Gandhian era in the Congress but Mr. Bose took up still another excellently wise step to silence such irresponsible interpreters. "It will always be my aim and object," said he, " to try and win his (Mahatma's) confidence for the simple reason that it will be a tragic step for me if I succeed in winning the confidence of the other people but fail to win the confidence of India's greatest man."

In the presence of these very wise utterances of Mr. Bose it was expected throughout the country that the right wingers would accept the defeat in a sporting spirit and they would prevent the recent contest from leaving any unpleasant legacy behind it, but the unfortunate statement of Mahatma Gandhi which he issued immediately after the election results gave rise to a most undesirable controversy once again, which ultimately resulted in a serious breach, an unpleasant revolt and a total set-back to democracy in the Congress.

It would have been good both for themselves and the country if other leading Congressmen had followed the President's example and refrained from making hasty statements but unfortunately it did not happen.

" I must confess," said Mahatma Gandhi, " that from the very beginning I was decidedly against his re-election for reasons into which I need not go. Since I was instrumental in inducing Dr. Pattabhi not to withdraw his name as a candidate, the defeat is more

mine than his. And I am nothing if I do not represent definite principles and policy. Therefore it is plain to me that the delegates do not approve of the principles and policy for which I stand. I rejoice in this defeat."

"The minority," he added, "can only wish the policy and programme of the majority all success. If they cannot keep pace with it they must come out of the Congress. If they can, they will add strength to the majority. The minority may not obstruct on any account. They must abstain when they cannot co-operate. I must remind all Congressmen that those who being Congress-minded remain outside the Congress by design represent it most. Those, therefore, who feel uncomfortable by being in the Congress may come out, not in a spirit of ill-will, but with the deliberate purpose of rendering more effective service."

Undoubtedly this was the most dangerous and undemocratic advice which the Mahatma tendered to his followers. Interested circles had already felt even before the actual contest took place that the Mahatma, the supreme moral head of the Congress, was not in favour of Mr. Bose's re-election and that his views were being interpreted by Sardar Patel and his friends. Although he had not unfolded the reasons for his doing so, yet the politically interested people in the country had easily comprehended that Mr. Bose was out of favour with the Mahatma only because he held

absolutely independent views, and in deference to his principles, whenever occasion arose, he had had the courage to differ from Mahatma, whose advice and policy had always been dominant in the Congress for the last twenty-five years.

Otherwise conceivably there could be no reason why the Mahatma should oppose his re-election and that his victory in the contest be considered his defeat. Although Mr. Bose took the earliest opportunity to show his respect and allegiance towards Mahatma Gandhi and defended his policy against any desperate criticism from the Gandhian press. nevertheless this statement of the Mahatma went a long way towards causing a very great split in the Congress ranks which ultimately resulted in the overthrow of Mr. Bose, the formation of the Forward Bloc and an open revolt of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee.

Mr. Bose, who so far had been trying to avoid any serious split in the Congress, now thought of another very wise method to tackle the problem and decided to make a pilgrimage to Wardha to have the blessings of Mahatma Gandhi. On the 15th of February in spite of ill-health and in total disregard of medical advice, he proceeded to Wardha. He had over three hours' conversation with Mahatmaji. After this meeting Mr. Bose declared that the Mahatma received him with his characteristic affection and that he was sure that Gandhiji's guidance would always be available to him. He further expressed that in an at-

mosphere of extreme cordiality they had discussions on the burning problems of the day for full three hours and that while they had not arrived at final decisions, they had reached certain tentative conclusions. He further requested the press and the public to exercise patience as " it will be premature to give publicity to them. " This statement was issued by Mr. Bose with Mahatmaji's approval. In the presence of this statement of Mr. Bose duly approved by him nobody ever expected anything from Mahatmaji's lips but there suddenly came unexpected bomb-shell from Wardha when Mahatma Gandhi in an interview told his interviewer that he had made it absolutely clear to Mr Bose that he could not expect the co-operation of his ex-colleagues in the matter of forming a new cabinet and the rightist members of the Working Committee were emphatic in their declaration that they would have nothing to do with the shaping of the Congress policy either before, or at or, after Tripuri Congress. Mahatmaji further conveyed to the reporter that now that he had a majority he should form his own cabinet and carry on Congress work and that there was no need for him to seek his advice or guidance inasmuch as the delegates had discountenanced Gandhism.

Such a revelation could hardly be expected after the statement issued by Mr. Bose regarding the conversation that took place between the two leaders but it seemed as if an organised non-co-operation had been

designed behind the screen. Immediately after these observations of the Mahatma there followed a joint resignation of twelve rightist members of the Working Committee, *viz.*, Sardar Patel, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Babu Rajendra Prasad, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mr. Bhulabhai Desai, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Mr. Harikrishna Mehtab, Acharya Kirpalani, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Mr. Jairamdas Daulatram and Seth Jamnalal Bajaj.

The Congress President was at that time having very high fever, over 103 degrees, when suddenly he received a telegram from Sardar Patel on behalf of his other colleagues conveying their resignations to him. This telegram was followed by a letter duly signed by all the twelve members of the cabinet.

All the leading socialists and radicals in the country exerted their utmost to maintain the unity of the Congress and did all that lay in their power to prevent a breach, but their persuasion utterly failed to convince the resigning members of the cabinet. In justification of their non-co-operation with the President they said, "Those who claim to be radical and advanced in outlook and views should take up the responsibility and not merely content themselves with criticising us for acts of omission and commission. This state of affairs has been tolerated long enough, and now that the leftists are in a majority they should be given a free hand in running the Congress." They further warned, "If they (radicals) fail, the

country will learn a much-needed lesson." In making these utterances they had probably forgotten that they were committing a most dishonourable deed which was not only detrimental to the best interests of the organisation but was sure to impede the advance of the country to freedom and that their disassociation would mean a total destruction of the magnificent temple of freedom, which they had toiled and suffered many long years to build.

Only a few weeks were left for the Congress to assemble at Tripuri. The President lying prostrate in bed was too weak even to read the several messages and enquiries that had been received by him at Calcutta in connection with the resignations of the members of the Working Committee. The doctors considered his health to be too delicate at the moment to permit him to express his views. At such a critical juncture of the national history when the great hero of India's liberty was lying almost unconscious in bed surrounded by his medical attendants the resignations were not only calculated to be unpatriotic but wholly unjustifiable and cruel. They came upon the country as a highly unsympathetic act.

It was definitely inconsistent with the high ideals of non-violence they had professed to believe and the great cause they had served for so many years of their lives. Such a precipitate action of the resigning members of the Working Committee was a disaster

for the country and it would not be untrue to say that Mahatma Gandhi was the main inspiration behind this unjustifiable move. In the circumstances that he commanded the unquestioned obedience of the rightists and a large number of leftists he could have easily handled the situation, when Mr. Bose made his last pilgrimage to Wardha, but in deference to the wishes of his lieutenants he completely ignored the consequences and permitted the breach to occur.

As soon as Mr. Bose became slightly better he considered the resignations of the twelve members of the Working Committee and decided to accept them. The President thought that no useful purpose would be served by requesting the members to withdraw the resignations as the signatories informed the President that the same had been tendered after mature deliberations.

This acceptance of the resignations placed for the moment a heavy task on his shoulders which the members of the Working Committee should have shared. The Congress Parliamentary Sub-Committee was automatically dissolved with the resignations of its all the three members, *viz*., Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad and Babu Rajendra Prasad. The secretarial duties were also to be managed by the President himself as Acharya Kirpalani had also resigned. At the time of such a great isolation, 'unmindful of his shattered health Mr. Bose did not lose courage but immediately managed the entire affairs of the Congress.

After a week or so the momentous session of the Congress was to take place at Tripuri. The crisis in the Congress had reached such a stage when a compromise became impossible. The days were speedily passing but the health of the President was showing no signs of improvement. On the 17th of February Dr. Sir Nilratan Sircar, who examined Mr. Bose, issued a bulletin regarding his condition stating that

> "He has had a serious attack of broncho-pneumonia and intestinal infection...and it is highly advisable for him to remain undisturbed in bed for at least another fortnight. I am afraid any attempt to undertake active work within the next fortnight may be fraught with positive danger. There may be either physical collapse or fresh and aggravated attack of acute infection."

At the appearance of this bulletin everywhere speculation was rife that either Mr. Bose would resign from the Presidential chair or the session will have to be postponed. But neither of these happened. As a matter of fact such circumstances were created that he should be compelled to leave the office. Three followers of the Gandhian policy who were the members of the Central Legislative Assembly as well as of the A.I.C.C. wrote to Mr. Bose that if he did not withdraw his allegations against the other members of the

Working Committee or substantiate them, they would move for an adjournment of the A.I.C.C. meeting and that if their motion was disallowed on technical grounds they would move that "the house should call upon you to vacate the office." Moreover Mr. Shambu Dayal Misra, a prominent member of the Reception Committee, also declared his intention to move a no-confidence motion against the President. In the presence of such a tense atmosphere when the entire old set of Congressmen had taken up vows to oust the President from the political life of the country Mr. Bose decided to face all the eventualities accompanied by that year's Presidential office and on the 6th of March unmindful of his weakened health he made a quiet entry into Tripuri in an ambulance car.

What happened at Tripuri is even more painful than the events that preceded it. It is a painful narration no doubt but it is impossible to ignore the hard facts which compelled Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose to lift the banner of rebellion against his other colleagues of the High Command.

Although the right wing leaders had declared it in unambiguous terms that the President would be given quite a free hand in running the Congress yet they did not stick to it and resorted to undignified tactics. In the light of all that had happened in the last one month and a half it was the duty of Gandhiji and his faithful colleagues to extend their fullest co-operation to Mr. Bose in the discharge of the great responsibilities which devolved upon him as a result of the clear

verdict of the Congress delegates. They should have awaited another year to convert the majority to their side but it seemed that a false sense of personal humiliation was making them uneasy. They had, therefore, come to Tripuri fully prepared to measure their strength. Pt. Gobind Ballabh Pant, the gifted parliamentarian and ex-Prime Minister of U.P., took up the initiative and moved the following resolution in the meeting of the A.I.C.C.

> "This Committee declares its firm adherence to the fundamental policies of the Congress which have governed its programme in the past years under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi and is definitely of the opinion that there should be no break in these policies and that they should continue to govern the Congress programme in the future. The Committee expresses its confidence in the work of the Working Committee which functioned during the last year and regrets that any aspersions should have been cast against any of its members In view of the critical situation that may develop during the coming year and in view of the fact that Mahatma Gandhi alone can lead the Congress and the country to victory during such a crisis, the Committee regards it imperative that the executive authority of the Congress should command his implicit confidence and requests the President to nominate the Working Committee for the ensuing year in accordance with the wishes of Gandhiji."

We need not reiterate the heated debates that followed the resolution since it is a fresh thing in the hearts of every Indian but one thing must be mentioned here that although the President was constitutionally competent to rule the resolution out of order yet because his own person was involved in it, notwithstanding the constitutional points raised by eminent men like Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar, Mr. M. N. Roy and Mr. M. S. Aney he gave Mr. Pant's resolution precedence over all others. Several amendments were moved but Mr. Pant refused to accept the change of even a word in the actual resolution.

All the amendments were either withdrawn or defeated. The Gandhian leaders carried the day; but unfortunately sowed the seeds of division, indiscipline and rivalry in the great organisation which had so far been considered to be the united voice of the nation.

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It was expected now that the President would resign his seat, the announcement for which he might make in the open session. Mr. Bose's health by now had deteriorated very much. There was a sudden rise in his temperature. Mr. Hennessey, Civil Surgeon of Jubbulpore, who examined Mr. Bose, said that there was a thick patch of broncho-pneumonia and "there are distinct signs of the right lung being affected." He was, therefore, advised to be removed to Civil Hospital, Jubbulpore, immediately. Dr. Gilder

also examined Mr. Bose and in a bulletin issued by him declared that "the right lung is involved in broncho-pneumonia process. He is in a very weak and exhausted condition and is unfit for any work mental or physical. I would advise removing him to hospital or a nursing home."

Such a serious illness of the prince of patriots whose every minute of life had been spent in the service of his country should have moved even the stone-hearted enemies; but this is no hidden secret that many of his opponents deliberately took his illness as an opportunity and spared no attempt to humiliate and overthrow him

"I have not come here to go to hospital in Jubbulpore. I would much rather die here than be removed elsewhere before the session is over"

These heroic words were said to have been uttered by Mr. Bose when Pandit Jawaharlal tried to persuade him to agree to be taken to hospital in Jubbulpore.

It is believed that Pandit Nehru apprised Mahatma Gandhi, who was at that time observing fast at Rajkot, by telephone of the serious turn the President's illness had taken and the stormy scenes of Tripuri but it seemed that he was as firm as a rock and the apprehended danger to the President's health could not move him to pity.

The open session was to take place two days later. The President's health did not improve at all but

deteriorated instead. He could not join the most spectacular and colossal procession which was taken out in his honour. His large photograph adorned in a beautiful manner was placed on the Presidential chariot driven by fifty-two richly caparisoned and decorated elephants.

On March 10 the open session of the Tripuri Congress commenced. Appeals were made not to aggravate Mr. Bose's critical condition by putting him to further pain and humiliation ; but all fell on deaf ears. The Congress Socialist Party who so far had acted as supporters of Mr Bose, made his position untenable by deserting him at the eleventh hour. The result was that in the open session also the victory fell to the Gandhian group and the actual resolution was carried by a heavy majority.

The open session had concluded but the expectation that Mr. Bose would resign did not prove true. The President, in obedience to the resolution passed both in the Subjects Committee as well as in the open session, decided to meet Mahatma Gandhi as soon as his health permitted, to discuss the future programme and the appointment of the members of the Working Committee.

The days passed on but the President's health did not show any satisfactory improvement. How could then he go to see Mahatma Gandhi to settle the whole affair ? Those, anxious to disrepute and overthrow him, utilised this opportunity and blamed him now for

causing stalemate in the affairs of the Congress.

Mr. Bose requested Mahatmaji to come to Calcutta for some time to effect the settlement regarding the appointment of the Working Committee but this request also met the same fate as several others before had. He, therefore, unmindful of this courtesy, initiated correspondence with Gandhiji on the matter.

While commenting on the Gandhi-Bose correspondence the *Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore very neatly summed up the position of both the correspondents in the following words :—

> "Many who read the correspondence with knowledge of the background will conclude whatever may be their view of the respective personalities and programmes of the two principals, that Mr. Bose emerges from the wordy exchange with most of the honours. Mr. Gandhi always refuses attempts to ' corner ' him ; seldom does he counter-argument with argument ; and his usual reply to a concrete suggestion is a *non possumus* on grounds which Mr. Bose has previously refused to accept as well founded."

The editor of this journal had indeed placed the essence of the correspondence before the public. There could be no better reading of it than what he had done. The correspondence also created confusion without leading to any fruitful result.

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Mr. Bose was very much particular to remove the

stalemate in the Congress affairs. He therefore saw no alternative but to summon the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee at Calcutta to settle the whole affair. The 28th of April was fixed for the A.I.C.C. to meet.

Some statements appeared in the press that the meeting of the A.I.C.C. should not be held at Calcutta lest the people of Bengal should be excited to avenge humiliation they faced at Tripuri. These were, however, false apprehensions. Mr. Bose, therefore, on coming to know of these fears issued the following reassuring statement :

> " Those who entertain such fears, do not, in my opinion know Bengal. To be able to hold the A.I.C.C. meeting in a province is a privilege, honour and welcome opportunity. On this occasion, the people of Bengal and of Calcutta, in particular will be the hosts of the rest of India. I am sure that in keeping with the tradition of patriotism and hospitality of which Bengal can legitimately feel proud, our guests will be given the warmest reception possible and will be offered our customary hospitality."

So the meeting took place on the fixed date. The people of Bengal accorded a right royal reception to the visitors with the exception of one or two unfortunate incidents when some young Bengali students misbehaved and threw a shoe on Babu Rajendra Prasad. This hostile demonstration was only

the result of a momentary enthusiasm in some youngmen for which Mr. Bose earnestly expressed regret.

At the meeting of the A. I. C. C. also hostile scenes were witnessed. The right wingers had come there in preponderating numbers to maintain the victory achieved at Tripuri, while the Bengal members tried to impress the necessity of the hour and appealed for national solidarity. When Mr. Bose saw that all the avenues of amicable settlement had been explored he decided to resign from the Presidentship in the interest of unity of the country. Lest the split in the Congress should strengthen the hands of the enemies, he placed his resignation before the All-India Congress Committee.

Pandit Jawaharlal moved a resolution requesting Mr. Bose to withdraw the resignation but his efforts proved fruitless, because the determination once made by him was always the final and he would very seldom budge from that.

The result was that the same old guard of Sardar Patel and his friends once again came into power and Babu Rajendra Prasad was made the next president of the Congress.

Chapter VI

THE REBEL

Rebellion always appears as a result of discontentment against the existing circumstances. When natural aspirations are forcibly gagged and justice and fairplay totally denied a revolution is the natural outcome of the situation.

Subhas Bose was full of despair at the attitude and tactics of the Patel group. He was refused all justice and fairplay at the hands of the Congress leaders. All the doors of the High Command were closed to him. No wonder, therefore, if Subhas, a born rebel who from the very school-days defied all shibboleths that savoured of autocracy and authority, lifted the banner of rebellion against the present mentality of the Congress. He had, for long, dreamed of revolutionising the Congress and of making it a really fighting organisation but the opportunity was refused to him now. He was greatly disappointed but at the same time he had firm convictions that the student organisations and mass movements in the country would decidedly prefer dynamic leadership. He, therefore, decided to make a direct appeal to the country and consolidate the leftist element in the Congress. Hence the Forward Bloc, the advanced wing of the Congress, came into being.

The general impression in the country is that the idea of organising Forward Bloc originated in Mr. Bose only after the momentous happenings of Tripuri but in fact this is wrong As a matter of fact it had been one of the greatest aims of his political activities to bring together all progressive, radical and anti-imperialist elements in the country and to launch a decisive struggle for India's freedom.

Since his release from Mandalay in 1927 his endeavour had always been to oppose every measure of the Congress which was based on policy of moderation. In Madras Congress held under the Presidentship of Dr. Ansari he crossed swords with the right for the first time and the Congress adopted the resolution of complete independence as its goal. Immediately after that when the All-Parties Conference met at Lucknow to give its approval of the Nehru Constitution for India, based on Dominion Status. he vehemently raised his voice against this conservative policy of the Congress and in collaboration with Pandit Jawaharlal and other left wingers organised leftist bloc in the form of Independence League. In December of the same year the annual session of the Congress met at Calcutta and the members of this League tried to induce the Congress to alter its creed and declare in unmistakable language complete independence to be the goal of the Congress. Although their efforts could not succeed because of the severest opposition of the main body of the Congress led by Mahatma Gandhi yet the events

of the Calcutta Congress gave a hopeful picture to the youth of the country that the organisation of a leftist bloc within the Congress was not very difficult. During the year that followed the Calcutta Congress, the left wingers continued their feverish activities to organise the students, the workers, the *kisans*, the socialists and the communists, to present a solid strength at the next session. They held a number of conferences in all the provinces and evoked enthusiasm everywhere. The result was that the Congress found itself forced to adopt at Lahore what it had rejected at Calcutta.

From 1930 to 1933 was a period of hardships and sufferings for the Congress and all shades of Congressmen were engaged in the struggle against the Government but the suspension of Civil Disobedience by Gandhiji in 1933 again brought forward the question of a left bloc. Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose was in Vienna at that time convalescing his health. He was already devising plans and discussing with Sjt. Vithalbhai Patel, the ex-President of the Central Assembly, the formation of an extremist party within the Congress but after that his determination became stronger and as it appeared from his statement issued from Vienna jointly with the President Patel, the policy of the Congress had become quite intolerable for him.

In 1934 the Congress Socialist Party came into being. Mr. Bose welcomed the party in that it was a

step forward from the Congress but he was not totally satisfied with its policy. In his presidential address in Haripura in 1938 he clearly observed that "the role of the Congress Socialist Party within the Congress should be anti-imperialist left wing role and not a socialist role and only by playing the former role would it continue to make headway."

From then onward up to the middle of 1937 he had remained either in prison or in Europe and was, therefore, debarred from putting his revolutionary programme before the Congress. But soon after his release in the same year he protested against the Congress's drift towards constitutionalism and emphatically raised his voice against Federation. In 1938 he became the President of the Indian National Congress at Haripura and immediately after that he tried to organise a leftist bloc in the Congress. In his own words, "It was generally felt that all progressive, radical and anti-imperialist elements in the Congress, who might not be ready to join the Socialist or Communist party, should be organised on the basis of the common minimum programme. I feel further that only by that means could the onslaught of the right be resisted and the soil prepared for the growth of a Marxist party." The duration between Haripura and Tripuri provided him with a favourable opportunity and he earnestly exerted to consolidate the leftist element in the Congress. What happened after Tripuri needs nothing more to add since a good deal

of it has been given in the preceding chapter.

It is thus a mistake to assume that Forward Bloc was formed as a result of Tripuri affairs. Ever since the Lahore session Subhas Bose had been voicing his opinion in favour of a new political party and his visit to foreign lands had confirmed his impression about its need. Soon after attaining his normal health Mr. Bose made a country-wide tour and worked incessantly to explain the aims and objects of his party and within a very short period he was able to organise its branches throughout India.

These activities of Mr. Bose, however, were not pleasing to the right wing leaders of the Congress. It was clear to each one of them that with his dominating personality he would soon be able to gather overwhelming support from all shades of Congressmen and thus convert the majority of opinion to his side. The Congress Working Committee therefore decided to put a stop to his activities.

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Very recently the A. I. C. C. had passed two resolutions, banning satyagraha in the provinces without the consent of the Provincial Congress Committees and defining the relations between the Congress Ministries and Provincial Congress Committees over which Mr. Bose differed sincerely. He was of the opinion that "these two resolutions if given effect to, will serve to accentuate the drift towards constitutionalism and to increase the influence, power

and authority of Provincial Ministries at the cost of the Congress organisation, to isolate artificially the Congress from the federal public as also the A.I.C.C. from the rank and file of the Congress." He therefore announced the organising of protest meetings against the decision of the A.I.C.C. The Congress President regarded this attitude of Mr. Bose and his followers as revolt against the A.I.C.C. and after a formal exchange of some letters between the Congress President and Mr. Bose, the Congress Working Committee met at Wardha and gave the following verdict :

> "The Working Committee has come to the painful conclusion that it will fail in its duty if it condones the deliberate and flagrant breach of discipline by Subhas Chandra Bose.
>
> "The Working Committee resolves that, for his grave act of indiscipline, Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose is declared disqualified as the President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and to be a member of any elected Congress Committee for three years, as from August 1939."

He received the news in quite an unconcerned manner because the favours from Wardha were by no means new to him. "Is that all?" he exclaimed when the decision of the Working Committee was conveyed to him.

Mr. Bose was not then even a primary member of the Congress. The Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, on the other hand, had elected him as its President, and was not at all willing to go without his leadership. The result was that the Working Committee went as far as suspending the entire Bengal Provincial Congress Committee.

To recount the entire controversy which led to the suspension of Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, the expulsion of Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose and his colleagues of the Congress Parliamentary Party and ultimate rebellion of Bengal with the High Command is not the object of this small book. A brief account may, however, be given of his activities till his sudden disappearance from public life.

Mr. Bose, as already said, is a fighter from birth. He would not for a minute tolerate any challenge to national honour. The Holwell Monument at Calcutta had for a long time been an object of standing disgrace to the people of India. Several attempts, no doubt, had been made previously to have it removed, but to no result. Mr. Bose, therefore, decided to lead a peaceful agitation for the removal of this monument. The people of Bengal who were always ready to be led by him, gladly followed his lead. The Bengal Government arrested him under the Defence of India Act and detained him for an indefinite period.

Mr. Bose was arrested but the movement he

started did not stop. The result was that the Bengal Government removed the monument to some safe place.

The people of Bengal entertained so much love and esteem for him that, while in jail, they returned him unopposed to the Central Assembly in a by-election.

The very cause of his detention in the jail, no doubt, had been removed, nevertheless the Government considered it necessary to keep him behind the bars to be tried under the Defence of India Rules in connection with a speech delivered by him at Mohammad Ali Park and an article written by him in his organ the *Forward Bloc* entitled the "Day of Reckoning."

Mr. Bose regarded his detention to be most unjust and although his health had seriously deteriorated in jail he resorted to hunger strike as a mark of protest against the orders of the Government. Before taking this "fateful step" he addressed a memorable letter to His Excellency the Governor of Bengal, the Hon'ble the Chief Minister and the Council of Ministers on 26th November 1940, which according to him was his "Political Testament." Here are some extracts from the letter:

"Herein I shall recapitulate what I have to say regarding my own case and shall also put down in black and white the considerations that are impelling me to take the most fateful step in my life.

" I have no longer any hope that I shall obtain redress at your hands. I shall, therefore, make but two requests—the second of which will be at the end of this letter. My first request is that this letter be carefully preserved in the archives of the Government, so that it might be available to those of my countrymen who will succeed you in office in future. It contains a message for my countrymen and is, therefore, my political testament.........

" There has been manifest illegality and injustice. Only one explanation can, to my mind, account for such strange conduct, *viz.*, that Government have been pursuing a frankly vindictive policy towards me for reasons that are quite inexplicable.

" For more than two months, the question has been knocking at the door of my conscience over and over again, as to what I should do in such a predicament.

" Should I submit to the pressure of circumstances and accept whatever comes my way—or should I protest against what, to me, is unfair, unjust and illegal? After the most mature deliberation I have come to the conclusion that surrender to circumstances is out of the question. It is a more heinous crime to submit to a wrong inflicted than to perpetrate that wrong. So, protest I must.

" But all these days, protest has been going on and the ordinary methods of protest have all been exhausted. Agitation in the press and on the platform,

representations to the Government, demands in the Assembly, exploration of legal channels—have not all of these been already tried and found ineffective? Only one method remains—the last weapon in the hands of a prisoner—*i.e.*, hunger strike or fast.

"In the cold light of logic I have examined the pros and cons of this step and have carefully weighed the loss and gain that will accrue from it. I have no illusion in the matter and I am fully conscious that the immediate tangible gain will be nil, for I am sufficiently conversant with the behaviour of Governments and bureaucracies during such crises. The classic and immortal examples of Terence Macswiney and Jatin Das are floating before my mind's eye at the moment. A system has no heart that could be moved, though it has false sense of prestige to which it always clings.

"Life under existing conditions is intolerable for me. To purchase one's continued existence by compromising with illegality and injustice goes against my very grain. I would throw up life itself rather than pay this price. Government are determined to hold me in prison by force. I say in reply, 'Release me or I shall refuse to live—and it is for me to decide whether I choose to live or to die.'

"Though there may be no immediate tangible gain, no sacrifice is ever futile. It is through suffering and sacrifice alone that a cause can flourish and prosper and in every age and clime the eternal law

prevails—'the blood of the martyr is the seed of the church.'

"In this mortal world, everything perishes and will perish—but ideas, ideals and dreams do not. One individual may die for an idea—but that idea will, after his death, incarnate itself in a thousand lives. That is how the wheels of evolution move on and the ideas, the dreams of one generation are bequeathed to the next. No idea has ever fulfilled itself in this world except through an ordeal of suffering and sacrifice.

"What greater solace can there be than the feeling that one has lived and died for a principle? What higher satisfaction can a man possess than the knowledge that his spirit will beget kindred spirits to carry on his unfinished task? What better reward can a soul desire than the certainty that his message will be wafted over hills and dales and over the broad plains to every corner of his land and across the seas to distant lands? What higher consummation can life attain than peaceful self-immolation at the altar of one's cause?

"Hence it is evident that nobody can lose through suffering and sacrifice. If he does lose anything of the earth he will gain much more in return, by becoming the heir to a life immortal.

"This is the technique of the soul. The individual must die, so that the nation may live. To-day I must die so that India may live and may win freedom and glory.

"To my countrymen I say—'Forget not that the greatest curse for a man is to remain a slave. Forget not that the grossest crime is to compromise with injustice and wrong. Remember the external law—you must give, if you want to get it. And remember that the highest virtue is to battle against iniquity, no matter what the cost may be.'

" To the Government of the day I say—'Cry halt to your mad drive along the path of communalism and injustice. There is yet time to retrace your steps. Do not use a boomerang which will soon recoil on you. And do not make another Sind of Bengal.'

"I have finished. My second and last request to you is that you should not interfere forcibly with my end peacefully. In the case of Terence Macswiney, of Jatin Das, or Mahatma Gandhi and in our own case in 1926—Government did decide not to interfere with the fast. I hope they will do the same this time...otherwise any attempt to feed me by force will be resisted with all my strength—though the consequences thereof may be even more drastic and disastrous than otherwise. I shall commence my fast on the 20th November 1940."

The Bengal Government knew it thoroughly well that this letter was not the threat of a weak-minded arm-chair politician but the voice of a militant patriot who was always prepared to lay down his life for his principles. For some time of course the Government

kept silent but when the warning was translated into action the authorities hastened to issue order for his release and the two cases lying pending against Mr. Bose in the Court of the Presidency Magistrate, Calcutta, were postponed till his recovery.

CHAPTER VII

THE EXILE AGAIN

This time after his release Mr. Bose spent very peaceful days with the exception of exchange of a few statements with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. He spent his time silently sitting in his room, not seeing anybody, not even the members of his family but spending his hours in religious worship. He had taken up the vow of silence. For many days before his disappearance he lived on milk and fruit juice only and like an ascetic spent his days in deep meditation. All those who knew him were surprised to see the hero in this new attitude.

On 26th of January 1941, suddenly the news came that Mr. Bose had disappeared from his residence. For over one year the story of his disappearance remained a mystery for his countrymen as well as for the Government but now this matter has been established beyond any doubt that Subhas Babu is away from his country in a state of self-imposed exile.

When he had disappeared from his sick-bed on January 26, 1941, in some quarters it was believed that the disgust for politics had so much overpowered him that like Sri Arbindo Ghosh he had also been driven to the life of a *sanyasi.* There were others who believed

that he had managed to escape to some foreign country. The mystery has been revealed now and it is no use dilating upon his probable whereabouts. Hence he is not a mystery man now but again an exile.

When the Government spokesmen first made their statements in the Council of State and the House of Commons that Subhas Bose was believed to be either in Rome or in Berlin the country hesitated to believe it because the source upon which they had relied their information was neither authentic nor convincing. The Government of India's information as it appeared from the statement of Eric Conran Smith, Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, was based upon some pamphlets said to have been distributed in Calcutta and also on Rome, Berlin and Tokyo radios' announcements.

As the time went on British news agencies became active and the news was not only given wide publicity but a series of articles were written on the subject to justify the Government's attitude. The *Statesman*, the Anglo-Indian daily of Calcutta, cried itself hoarse that Subhas Bose had connections with the Fascist countries even when he was the President of the Indian National Congress and that he used to get regular money from the Dictators to organise "Fifth Column" in India.

From the Reuters down to the pettiest British news agencies in India it was announced that Subhas

Bose had struck an alliance with the Axis Powers and that he was either in Rome or in Berlin. It was yet a subject of controversy in the country when on March 28, 1942, suddenly the Reuters broadcasted from London that "Subhas Chandra Bose was killed in an air crash off the coast of Japan, according to the Lyons radio quoting a Tokyo message." The news agency further announced that "Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose lost his life when the plane in which he was flying to Tokyo to attend a 'Free India Congress' crashed off the Japanese coast, according to a Tokyo message. With him were his adjutants and a number of other Indians."

But soon the news was contradicted and it became known that Subhas Bose was not dead but alive and kicking. Immediately after that the London correspondent of the *Bombay Chronicle* reported that Subhas Bose was in Berlin and while introducing him to the pressmen the Dictator of Germany had conferred on him the title of "India's Fuehrer and Excellency" and that his rank in that foreign land was that of foreign ambassador. These various talks about this ex-President of the Indian National Congress have now confirmed the belief that Subhas Chandra Bose is either in Rome or in Berlin or in Tokyo and it is now a thing of common talk, in the British and in the Indian press, that he has struck an alliance with the Axis Powers for the liberation of his country from the foreign yoke and has actually signed a pact

with the Fascist countries.

How far he was justified in doing that and whether it would be possible for him to achieve his object, *viz.*, the independence of India through the help of those countries we are incompetent to say anything about it. Time alone will tell; but one thing that every Indian painfully realises is that his disappearance from the political scene of India at such a critical juncture in our national history is a great loss to the nation and that the responsibility of his disappearance devolves almost entirely upon Gandhiji and his lieutenants, who, in their mad desire to retain their undisputed supremacy in the Congress, made absolutely no attempt to accommodate a brave and noble fighter of India's freedom.

We might ignore for one moment the camp-to-camp canvassing of the "Big Neutrals" during the late hours of midnight to gather support for Pandit Pant's resolution at Tripuri which consequently overthrew Mr. Bose from the presidential chair. We might in the same way ignore the cold, discourteous, uncompromising and irrational attitude of Gandhiji, after the conclusion of the momentous Tripuri session irrespective of the repeated attempts of Mr. Bose to cement the breach, but even an unprejudiced observer cannot afford to overlook a mere lack of courtesy at every step on the part of the Mahatma in the latest correspondence between the two leaders in which Mr. Bose placed himself unreservedly at his disposal.

(2)

Before concluding the narrative something more is required to be said about this dynamic personality.

It is difficult to think of any front rank Congress leader who has not been at one time or the other a whole hogging follower of Mahatma Gandhi. The saint of Sabarmati has successfully cast his spell over all the Congress leaders but in case of Subhas Bose we can say that he was never enamoured of Gandhian ideals, and from the very beginning Gandhism and all that it stood for was an anathema to him.

Back in early twenties when he was a young man and struggling his way in politics, the personality that appealed to him was of C. R. Dass and not of Gandhi. As long as C. R. Dass lived Subhas Bose was one of his ablest lieutenants and a vigorous spokesman of Swarajists' cause in Bengal and when he died Subhas Bose was chosen as his political successor in the province.

While calculating the correct date one would say that Subhas entered into active politics of the Indian National Congress during the year 1921 but his real role in the political history of the Congress commences after his release from Mandalay in 1927. The excellent way in which he represented the great leader Desh-bandhu Dass, on whose sad demise he was called upon by the people to lead the province is doubtlessly exemplary. He had been a most prudent diplomat possessing absolutely independent views in whole of

his political career. He inherits most of the virtues of Deshbandhu.

Though younger in age, he has got to his credit an enviable position among the few intellectual stalwarts who have had the courage to press their independent views in the face of heavy opposition of majorities. He may well be seen in the same row of dauntless Indian leaders which once constituted Lokmanya Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, Pandit Motilal Nehru and Deshbandhu C. R. Dass. He had been all along an adverse and a very hard critic of Gandhiji. Gandhiji both feared and admired him.

Nobody will perhaps deny that those in the Congress politics who fell into disfavour of the Mahatma, for one reason or the other, very soon saw their political positions swept away from them in a process which they could neither understand nor withstand ; but Bose is quite an exception.

His unbroken record of sufferings and sacrifices, his outstanding intellect and political ability, his daring habits, his stainless purity of life, his deep devotion to the cause of country, his arduous endeavours in the fight for freedom had perhaps won him a position which cannot be eclipsed by the full might of the great Mahatma and even by the collective influence of the entire right wing bloc.

Nariman kicked off the princely career, suffered heavily for his country, gave everything to the Con-

gress but to-day he is a back-number. He had the authority to decorate the Mayoral chair and he had actually done it in Bombay for a considerable period.

He is an extreme devotee to the Congress cause, wields unbounded influence in Bombay and possesses the efficiency to handle the administration of his province more than perhaps any other member of the Congress Party in Bombay but the Mahatma's diplomacy threw him into insignificance from which he might take years to rise. He lost his place from the Working Committee, because he had once mustered courage to criticise Gandhiji's political wisdom on the occasion of Gandhi-Irwin Pact. He has got a unique record of sufferings and sacrifices to his credit, He fought and risked his life for the independence of India, but when a small concession was received he was pushed to the last row because he did not move according to the jerks administered from Sabarmati or Wardha. Srinivas Iyengar, Sardul Singh, Satya Pal, Kitchlew, all of them, the brave warriors of the Congress and noble fighters for freedom, have also very bitterly tasted the wrath of the Mahatma. A closer study of the casualties from the non-violent ashram would very clearly bring to light the mockery of non-violence and truth but their detailed explanation, we are afraid, will exceed the limits and object of the present publication. We, therefore, are content to say that Gandhiji was so much overpowered by the noble

sacrifices of this. noblest son of India that in spite of the clear knowledge of the fact that Bose's coming into power would mean a serious menace to his supremacy in the Congress still he found himself helpless to cause any obstruction in the way of his *unopposed election to the presidential chair for the* first time.

(3)

Subhas Bose has been during the whole of his life a stern devotee of Shakti. Unlike the socialists of to-day he had always been a man of religion inspired with the love of his country and mankind. With faith in the Almighty and deep devotion to the *Chandi* he could be expected to jump in the flames of fire when the cause of his country required. To "compromise with injustice and wrong" was "the grossest crime" and to remain a slave was the greatest sin to him. Sadhu, no doubt, he had been during the whole of his life in the real sense of the word, nevertheless, he was invariably opposed to the idea of running away to caves and jungles and taking to solitudes since his disappointed return from the Himalayas in his school days. He is gifted with quite a genuine and blameless character free from all vices. He does not even smoke. His faith in his country and mankind surpasses all other ideas. His sacrifices for his country are quite unrivalled—greater than all the things he has made the sacrifice of his youth. He is above forty-five yet he is a bachelor. Whenever he is questioned

about his marriage he tells his friends and relatives that he has no time to think over it. To leave the field in disgust and disappointment cannot be expected of him. He would better prefer every limb of his body to be cut into pieces in the field than to turn his back upon it. He is a strong and clean fighter with unbounded perseverance and determination at his credit. He is immensely resourceful, a unique enthusiast and a practical politician gifted with excellent power of organisation and unrivalled capacity for putting in hard work. He is not merely an idealist but a shrewd and clever statesman with efficiency and intellect to leave behind astute parliamentarians.

(4)

Subhas Bose's relations with Mahatma Gandhi in the political struggle of the country have been considerably dealt with in the preceding chapters and the readers must be in a position now to conclude for themselves that there are fundamental differences between the two leaders. The Mahatma stands for complete non-violence, truth and *Rama Rajya* while Subhas Bose possesses quite different views from Mahatma's ideology.

In his well-known book "Indian Struggle 1920—1934" Subhas Bose has given a very beautiful analysis of the Mahatma, Pandit Nehru and the Congress Working Committee and we believe it would be of interest for the readers to know of that but before

we reproduce some specimens of the same we like to quote some passages from the *News Review* of England which we are sure would reveal what the foreign press thinks of the two principles. Soon after his disappearance the journal wrote:

"A sleek young Cambridge graduate with extreme left wing views on India's future used to be tipped a year or so ago as Mahatma Gandhi's eventual successor.

"Plump, amiable Subhas Chandra Bose, ex-President of the Congress, later Leader of the *Swarajya* (self-rule) Party, had a programme which was as different from the mild Mahatma as chalk from cheese.

"Its main points:

"(1) Complete Independence from Britain according to Bose, (Mr. Gandhi was ready to compromise).

"(2) Continuance of the Nationalist campaign (Gandhi wanted to postpone it).

"(3) Progressive industrialisation (Gandhi was content with his pet hobbies, prohibition and the fostering of handicrafts)."

Here are some specimens of Subhas Bose's writings about the Mahatma.

"There is something in Gandhi which appeals to the mass of the Indian people. Born in another country, he might have been a complete misfit. What, for instance, would he have done in a country like Russia, Germany or Italy? His doctrine of non-violence would

have led him to the cross or to the mental hospital. In India it is different. His simple life, his vegetarian diet, his goat's milk, his day of silence every week, his habit of squatting on the floor instead of sitting on a chair, his loin-cloth, in fact everything connected with him, has marked him out as one of the eccentric mahatmas of old and has brought him nearer to his people. Wherever he may go even the poorest of the poor feels that he is a product of the Indian soil—bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh. When the Mahatma speaks he does so in a language that they comprehend, not in the language of Herbert, Spencer and Edmund Burke, as, for instance, Sir Surendernath Banerjee would have done, but in that of the Bhagwad Gita and the Ramayana. When he talks to them about *Swarajya* he does not dilate on the virtues of provincial autonomy or federation, he reminds them of the glories of *Ram-Rajya* (the kingdom of the Rama of old) and they understand. And when he talks of conquering through love and *ahimsa* (non-violence) they are reminded of Buddha and Mahavira and they accept him."

He again writes:

"In many ways he is altogether an idealist and a visionary. In other respects he is an astute politician. At times he is obstinate as a fanatic; on other occasions he is liable to surrender like a child. The instinct, or the judgment, so necessary for political bargaining is lacking in

him. When there is an opportunity for a bargain as in 1921, he is liable to stick out for small things and thereby upset all chances of a settlement. Whenever he does go in for a bargain, as we shall see in 1931, he gives more than he takes. On the whole, he is no match in diplomacy for an astute British politician."

While writing about the Congress cabinet after 1929 he said :—

" Since the death of these three giants (L. Lajpat Rai, Pandit Motilal Nehru and Deshbandhu C. R. Dass), the leadership of the Congress has fallen to a low intellectual level. The Congress Working Committee to-day is undoubtedly composed of some of the finest men of India—men who have character and courage, patriotism and sacrifice. But most of them have been chosen primarily because of their " blind " loyalty to Mahatma and there are few among them who have the capacity to think for themselves or the desire to speak against the Mahatma when he is likely to take a wrong step. In the circumstances, the Congress cabinet of to day is a one-man show."

He once again wrote :—

" But since their death, the entire intellect of the Congress has been mortgaged to one man and those who dare to think freely and speak

out openly are regarded by the Mahatma and his disciples as heretics and are treated as such."

Regarding Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru he wrote :—

"The position of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in this connection is an interesting one. His ideas and views are of a radical nature and he calls himself a full-blooded socialist but in practice he is a loyal follower of the Mahatma. It would probably be correct to say that while his brain is with the left wingers, his heart is with Mahatma Gandhi."